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Academics in transition - Internationalisation of academic
professionals in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union

by

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Thesis submitted for a degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education

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June 2011

Abstract

This thesis investigates the experiences of internationalisation among academics from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, focusing on the role of internationalisation in the construction of academic identity, practice and approaches to university reform. The research is situated in the context of profound policy and ideological change in higher education systems in this region during the transition period, and in a wider discussion of global trends in higher education. The study adopts a qualitative and biographical approach, drawing on data from life story narratives elicited in interviews with twenty individual academics. Thus, the thesis presents an alternative look at internationalisation conceived not as an institutional policy but as individual experience responsible for the formation or reformulation of academic identity, values, dispositions and academic practices. The concept of individualisation is used as the main theoretical tool through which experiences of internationalisation can be studied and understood as elements of individual life story. The findings of this research concern the different ways in which a novel and hybrid or multiple set of academic identities and practices have been constructed on the basis of significant internationalisation experiences among academics located in particular (and partially shared) historical and policy contexts. Among the interviewed academics, internationalisation is found to be a very productive tool in the shaping of academic identity, practice and attitude towards university reform, which is reflected through a specific individualised life story.

Contents:

Introduction. The object, orientation and perspective of the study.	7
The policy context for the analysis of professional identity as an object of research.	9
The level of analysis and the theoretical perspective.	11
The object of study- initial research interest and the research questions.	17
The key elements of the methodological orientation.	22
Autobiography as part of research orientation.	25
 Chapter 1. Global and regional transformations in higher education policy and practice.	 28
1.1 Locating the research in a large-scale policy context.	28
1.2 The view from above: global and national system level.	29
1.3 Globalisation	32
1.4 Internationalisation	38
1.5 Europeanisation	44
1.6 The view from below: transformations on the local level.	54
 Chapter 2. Transformations in Eastern European higher education.	 64
2.1 The general background of transformations in the post-soviet and post-socialist higher education.	64
2.2 The transition and global/regional trends as a defining policy context.	70
2.3 The Western influences on the profession: gaps in current research.	82
 Chapter 3. The theoretical and conceptual approach of the study.	 91
3.1 Internationalisation and the focus on individual academics in transforming contexts.	91
3.2 Available conceptual and theoretical approaches in research on professional and academic identity.	97
3.3 Insights from social theory: the concept of self in transforming societies.	104
3.3.1 The changing position of individuals in society.	105
3.3.2 The reflexive construction of individual identity.	111
 Chapter 4. Narrative methods and methodological positioning of the researcher.	 117
4.1 The epistemological orientation of the research project and the methodology selected.	117
4.2 Characteristics of narrative methods as a specific form of qualitative social science methodology.	120
4.3 Building the data gathering and data analysis process.	127
4.4 The interviewees and research locations.	133
4.5 The specific institutional positioning of the researcher.	137
4.6 The narrative account of the research orientation: the researcher's biography.	141
4.7 The ethical dimension of narrative and biographical research.	148
 Chapter 5. Situating internationalisation in the context of transitional selves.	 154
5.1 Introduction	154
5.2 The narrative of the problematic past as a trigger for internationalisation and individualisation.	156
5.3 The narrative of individualisation through choice of discipline.	159
5.3 The narratives of internationalisation as transformative of the self.	161
5.4 The alternative narrative of the unproblematic past in family lives.	164
5.5 The narrative of internationalisation as a 'chance'.	167
5.6 The narratives of difficulties of internationalisation.	170
5.7 Summary of findings on the construction of international experiences as individualised lives.	175

Chapter 6. Internationalisation and the construction of hybrid academic identity.	178
6.1 Narratives related to the integration of an internationalised academic identity.	178
6.1.1 The narrative of continued internationalisation as identity building.	178
6.1.2 The narratives of internationalisation as a career requirement.	180
6.1.3 The narratives of re-integration into local academic life.	185
6.2 The different degrees of internationalization story and its effects on the self.	188
6.2.1 Narratives of profound internationalization.	189
6.2.2 Narratives of significant internationalization.	193
6.2.3 Narratives of partial internationalization.	199
6.3 Summary of findings regarding internationalisation in constructions of academic identity.	202
Chapter 7. The meanings of internationalisation for academic practice.	204
7.1 Introduction	204
7.2 Effects of internationalisation in relation to academic research practice.	206
7.2.1 Effects on disciplinary specialisation areas.	206
7.2.2 Effects on research skills.	210
7.2.3 Effects on research publication and presentation.	214
7.2.4 Effects on academic language and expression.	218
7.3 Effect on understanding of teaching practices.	221
7.3.1 The productivity of Western teaching approaches for espoused practice.	222
7.3.2 Internationalised influences on teaching in reported practice.	226
7.3.3 Neutral or negative views on the impact of internationalisation on teaching practices.	231
7.4 Effects on the perception of professional relationships with colleagues and administrators.	238
7.5 Summary of findings regarding internationalisation in academic practice.	244
Chapter 8. The meanings of internationalisation for academics' attitudes towards university reform.	246
8.1. The narrative of distancing oneself from the local.	247
8.2 Narrative of failed reform management.	253
8.3 The construction of the reformer identity.	258
8.4 The narrative of "othering" of the older academic generation.	263
8.5 The exercise of agency in new institutional settings.	268
8.6 Summary of findings regarding orientations to reform.	276
Conclusion	279
The research topic and the underlying theoretical approach.	279
The research design and methodology.	284
The research process.	286
Main research findings.	288
Some shortcomings of the study.	297
Implications of the study for further research and for professional practice.	300
Bibliography	304

List of tables and figures:

Figure 1. The analytical approach to data analysis.	132
Table 1. Basic background of each informant.	134
Table 2. Main internationalisation experiences of each informant.	136

Acknowledgements:

This thesis took over six years to complete, and I could not have been successful without the support of many individuals. First and foremost, I am very grateful to my supervisor, Prof. Ken Jones who supported and led my project with much care. I have benefited enormously from his research experience, his calm and confidence in all the moments of confusion, and, of course, his clear and useful comments on multiple, unfinished chapter drafts and on the whole thesis. I would also like to thank my second supervisor, Dr. Sally Findlow, for reading and commenting on a rather messy and repetitive draft of the thesis.

I would like to thank all the tutors on the Keele University's Ed.D. program who have worked with me during the early years of my doctoral study and helped me develop this research project - in particular, Prof. Miriam David, Dr. Stephen Whitehead, Dr. Nafsika Alexiadou and Dr. Farzana Shain.

I have to voice my gratitude to the Dean of Special and Extension Programs at Central European University, Dr. Sophie Howlett, for her encouragement for me to apply to the program and her help in gaining financial resources and time allowance from my university that made my progress possible. I would also like to thank my colleagues at SEP and my own office, Curriculum Resource Center, for putting up with my absences and filling in for me during training sessions.

I would like to thank my wonderful parents-in-law - David and Eileen Roe, for their help in making the logistic of studying at Keele not only possible, but also completely stress-free, in particular, I wish to thank my father-in-law for driving me to the university and back all those times over seven years.

I am grateful to my husband, Paul for helping to keep my confidence and my spirits up through the research years, as he had done already during my MPhil years. His belief in my progress, his advice and his companionship during all the 'multiple identity crises' of a mature, part-time doctoral student, have meant a lot to me. I am lucky to have a group of supportive academic and non-academic friends in Budapest who have kept my life in balance and have cheered every milestone towards submission. Finally, I am grateful for all the love, support and never-ceasing encouragement I have received from my mother, Zofia Larczynska, over all the years of my academic training.

Introduction. The object, orientation and perspective of the study.

Current research on higher education is concerned with little else than continuous analysis of change, particularly change in national educational systems (Scott, 1995; Trowler, 2002; Bleiklie, 2002). There is a consensus that higher education is profoundly changing in all contexts and on all levels of functioning at present, in most locations around the world (Gornitzka et al., 2005; Trowler, 2002; Enders and Fulton, 2002). The issues being contested in higher educational policy and research through discussions on change and its consequences are the purpose of higher education as well as the future shape of concrete institutions and the meanings of education for individuals and for different social groups within these transforming systems.

Writing on the relationship between educational policy and social institutions or discourses, Ozga points out that the planning of a research project ‘involves identifying *what* is to be studied, clarifying the researcher’s *orientation* to what is studied, and indicating the *perspective* from which the research is undertaken’ (Ozga, 2000: 52). I adopt this particular conceptualisation of the research design process for the purpose of introducing and explaining my research interest in academic identity in the context of change in Eastern European Higher Education. In this introduction, I am going to outline the object of study and the theoretical-methodological perspective from which my analysis will proceed. My orientation to the study will also be briefly outlined when discussing the implications of my professional and autobiographical positioning within the research process. All these aspects of research are later to be explained in more detail in the subsequent theoretical and methodological chapters.

The need for the articulation of an object of study was pointed out by Fairclough (2005) in arguing for the need of research on social change in Eastern Europe:

The process of constructing ‘objects of research’ from research topics involves selecting theoretical frameworks, perspectives and categories to bring to bear on the research topic, it is only on the basis of such theorisation of the research topics and the delineation of ‘objects of research’ that one can settle upon appropriate methods of data selection, collection and analysis (Fairclough, 2005: 13).

The articulation of an object of study is not an easy and clear-cut process. My research is not concerned with higher education policy itself, but rather concentrates on uncovering meanings of social change as they are experienced and engaged in by educators coming from profoundly transforming locations. Fundamentally, this thesis is a product of the process of articulating academic identity emerging out of the material experience of internationalisation as an object of research. I would like to propose a focus on the study of internationalisation as experienced by academics, and I believe that it is a legitimate and missing ‘object of study’ in the discussion of change in higher education in Eastern Europe. In the following part of the introduction, I will outline how it has come to become my particular interest, and how do I propose to study it.

The policy context for the analysis of professional identity as an object of research.

The notions of change, transition and transformation provide the most broadly defined context and a background for my study. Eastern European higher educational systems have been undergoing significant change (Scott, 2006, 2002; Kwiek, 2001a; Cerych, 1997). Apart from experiencing profound economic and political transformation of the entire countries, the universities have faced their own economic transition from state sponsored to partially self-financed and, usually, severely under-financed status (Hossler et al., 1999: 61). Connected with this is the appearance of private higher education institutions (Tomusk, 2003a; Galbraith, 2003) and the change from state-regulated economy and employment to a new, capitalist labour market (Sertar and Prohribny, 1999: 169). One could also mention the decentralisation of university administration from the state to university level and the resulting (relative) university autonomy and the recent rise of newer quality assurance mechanisms (Temple and Billing, 2003; Tomusk, 2000a). Some studies suggest that entrepreneurialism or ‘grey entrepreneurialism’ are also becoming relatively widespread in these educational systems as they deal with economic and societal transformations (Williams and Kitaev, 2003; Howlett, 2010). On the other hand, there is also the potentially significant as well as problematic ongoing process of ‘Europeanisation’ of curricula and programs, particularly apparent in the new EU states (Haug and Tauch, 2001; Tomusk, 2007) but also very much central in the policy discourse of the other post-soviet and post-socialist countries due their participation in the Bologna process (Howlett, 2006). Kwiek, (2001b) claims that the focus on the transforming pressures of globalisation have been largely overlooked in the 1990s, however,

they will also be increasingly subject to these pressures and will be affected by them in as profound ways as other, Western higher education systems.

In brief, we can witness significant shifts in the educational structures, regulations and preoccupations of higher education policy (and the policy research) which may mark a transition from the communist content and models of education to some kind of new, post-communist or post-socialist higher education sector. Traditionally modelled on the ‘Humboltian model’ of the university (e.g. Scott, 2002), the higher education systems of an entire region are understood to be shifting towards what are often called ‘European’ or ‘international’ models. It is obvious that we are witnessing significant social transformations of educational values in Eastern Europe but it is not clear what the outcomes of these processes are, beyond the level of policy writing and national policy decisions or new regulatory frameworks. We know relatively little about institutional effects and implementation or resistance to new policy and values, and less about what the proposed changes mean for actual faculty in their academic and management capacities, what older practices prevail or how the new ideas and underlying older paradigms interact to influence actual practices.

Studies of higher education transformation of 1990s and 2000s have taken a system-level and highly descriptive approach (e.g. Slantcheva, 2003; Smolentseva, 2006, 2003; Nicolescu, 2002) with qualitative and more in depth analyses largely missing or performed on a very modest scale (for an exception, see Sabloff, 1999). There had been an early acknowledgement that many of the large scale processes have in fact been started bottom-up by institutional

leaders themselves under the influence of foreign advisors (e.g. Cerych, 1997: 78-79), but a more 'thick description' of such processes is not often available.

The most important point for my own research in this area is the passing notice that some researchers have paid to the input from international agencies, foreign NGOs and governments of Western nations, into the experience of change, in particular in the significantly underdeveloped disciplines of social science and humanities (Iarskaia-Smironova, 2006, 2010). My interest relates to understanding the experience of internationalisation of academic identity and practice, a material and ideological process, that I argue has been contributing to the remaking of the practitioners of higher education in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union in such a way as to make them potential proponents of the new 'orders of discourse' (Fairclough, 2003: 24) and 'policy technologies' (Ball, 2003: 215) such as entrepreneurialism in higher education. These policy discourses in themselves and the emerging material relations and practices are an important field of study in the Western countries, and they certainly require much further clarification and research in Eastern European contexts.

The level of analysis and the theoretical perspective.

Existing higher education research suffers from a predominance of policy analysis perspective, which usually focuses on national level, or even a more abstracted system level analysis. Indeed, most studies of higher education seem to be done by 'academic policy scientists' (Gornitzka et al., 2005: 1) who focus on the likely causal principles behind the

transformations of each system. This predominant form of research on higher education is often a desktop documentary analysis study, relying on available policy texts and large scale statistical information. Such research forms the majority of published studies on higher education (Tight, 2003: 11). This means that much complexity of educational change is often not studied in a qualitative manner, and arguably, the complexity of the experience of ongoing change demands a greater diversity of research methods and theoretical perspectives. To focus on studies of educational systems as the main unit of analysis in the context of profound transformations risks missing some of the substantial meanings of these transformations, their dangers, effects, and contradictions. At present, institutionally focused research is not widespread, and certainly not in Eastern European context, but ‘meso’ level and practitioner-level focused studies are even rarer. By ‘meso’ level I mean the level below the institution which usually provides the actual context of educational provision and research, such as a department or faculty. The importance of lower levels in understanding change or policy implementation in higher education has been argued for by Trowler (2002: 4) who outlines the institutional, departmental and individual faculty level ‘implementation staircase’ as a complex path in policy-making:

In this view then policy is also ‘made’ as it is received in different locales (sometimes with loss or fuzziness in parts of the message), interpreted and implemented. It is made too as practitioners go about their daily business, whether they are aware of it or not, as recurrent practices, sets of attitudes and assumptions are realised in specific contexts of practice (Trowler, 2002: 3).

Seen in this way, educational policy is a context enabling or constraining educational practices and contributing to outcomes, rather than simply creating them.

While ‘meso’ level studies are needed to provide more insight into policy implementation in institutional contexts, my particular interest is in the experiences of change on the individual level of particular academics, situated within, but not defined by, the institutional and the larger, national contexts. To study educational change from individual level upwards rather than from the system level downwards is a reversal of predominant sociological and policy analysis trends, and it is a form of commentary, and a critique of such approaches. In pursuing this approach I am particularly following Ozga’s (2000) arguments on the meaning of policy analysis in education: ‘Education policy research should be available as a resource and arena of activity for teachers in all sectors because of its capacity to inform their own policy directions, and to encourage autonomous, critical judgement of government policy. (Ozga, 2000: 5) This reversal of focus from system to individual level acknowledges the productive *as well as* the reproductive role that actual individuals play in education as its practitioners and as ‘on-the-ground’ policy actors.

The existing studies of education that do acknowledge the necessity to focus on the individual practitioner often come from critical, feminist or gender-focused studies of education. Many feminist researchers of education persistently ask: ‘what would a local analysis show? (Deem, 2001)’. This tradition is obviously particularly rich and productive when it comes to the analysis of specific gendered experiences of education, of female students or women non-participants of higher education, women academics, teachers and administrators (Skelton,

2005; Hey, 2003; Blackmore and Sachs, 2001; Walkerdine et al., 2001; Blackmore, 1999; David and Woodward, 1998; Morley and Walsh, 1996; Dillabough, 1999). This research also often undertakes a critique of mainstream social science and policy studies (Bensimon and Marshall, 1997: 6) in studying the phenomena of educational achievement, access, leadership, management, and teaching. Thus, feminist research promises to develop some useful theoretical perspectives for the study of the individual in education.

In addition, feminist researchers have also employed new methodological approaches in their studies of the gendered aspects of educational experience or practice. This tradition teaches us to see the participants and professionals in the context of change in a qualitative, sociological focus that avoids over-generalising. In particular, they have been applying the biographical perspective in interview-based (Byrne, 2003) ethnographic (Walkerdine et al., 2001) and life narrative or autobiographical analyses (David, 2002; Deem, 1996). This form of research is following, but also contributing to the qualitative and autobiographical or reflexive turn in social science (Czarniawska, 2004; Denzin and Lincoln, 2003: viii) which promises to be a good avenue for the study of the educational perspectives emerging from the changing field of Eastern European higher education. My own research is not explicitly gender-oriented; however, it takes as the centre of its investigation the individual academic as an object of study and employs the narrative perspective in researching these individuals' experiences of internationalisation.

However, perhaps the most significant endorsement of the research that focuses on the individual comes from mainstream social theory dealing with the theorisation of the large

scale social change. In particular Beck and Beck-Gernsheim's (2001) study of individualisation and Giddens' theorisation of self-identity (1991) both point to changing patterns of how individuals fit the social structures in late or high modernity, or post-industrialism. Late modernity in Giddens' terms is a continuation of modernity, but with specific characteristics, such as uncertainty over social roles and the post-traditional patterns of existence in societies, and, as such, is of course primarily applied in relation to the developed capitalist societies.

The individual is increasingly seen as the key point of reference for sociological research, and the transformations in the individuals are in a dialectic relationship with global processes: 'transformations in self-identity and globalisation ... are the two poles of the dialectic of the local and the global in conditions of high modernity. Changes in intimate aspects of personal life, in other words, are directly tied to the establishment of social connections of very wide scope (Giddens, 1991: 32)'

What this means is that in social science in general we are increasingly studying complexity and individual differences that go beyond the meanings previously provided by more or less stable or uniform social categories such as gender, class, ethnicity, location. This does not mean less social control or less social structure as such, but it means a different dynamic of experiencing the effects of newer social structures and new pressures on people's lives. Instead of clearly marked out biographies predetermined to some extent by geographical and social location, class, gender, people are subject to a process of *individualisation*, which results in proliferation of possible biographies. (Beck-Gernsheim, 2001). This necessitates a continuous and uncertain 'reflexive project' of self-creation of the individualised individual

(Giddens, 1991). The individual in this perspective is seen as a product of shifting multiple identities that is impossible to ever be satisfactorily completed. In terms of educational identities or capabilities Gee calls the individualised individual the ‘portfolio person’ (Gee, 2000: 61-62) and in relation to the emerging working identities du Gay calls this new person ‘the entrepreneur of oneself’ (du Gay, 1996: 72).

This is a promising endorsement of individual-oriented research as it would suggest that transformations in society or its aspects can best be studied by focusing on these individual’s accounts of changes as they strive to create a different self-identity, pressured to do so by new structural conditions and enabled to do so by some global trends.

Researchers of education have engaged with the concept of individualisation in critical ways, for example by studying the emerging live narratives of university students in various countries (Brannen and Nilsen, 2005) and also by researching the professional identity of women academics of different generations (Skelton, 2005), or working class women in higher education (Reay, 2003). Researchers of education engage with the concept of individualisation in productive ways, particular in studies of the problems associated with the creation of neo-liberal gendered subjects through education and upward mobility associated with education (Walkerline, 2003; Harris, 2005; Archer, 2008). My aim will be to see if this theoretical approach can be productive in understanding experiences in internationalisation among Eastern European faculty members. In this research, I follow the theoretical and methodological traditions that have been created by these researchers, and which have been

conceptualised by the theorists of the reflexive modernisation thesis as I aim to illuminate the creation of a newer type of professional identity.

Thus, my overall research perspective essentially relies on the possibility provided by some feminist research and by social theory to study educational change in higher education on the individual level, rather than on the system or institutional level. The theoretical perspective of my research is described more in depth in Chapter 3.

The object of study- initial research interest and the research questions.

My research interest is in the notion of academic identities as they have emerged in the post 1989 context of higher education, in countries of Central and Eastern Europe. More specifically, I study a small sample of a cohort of young to mid-career academics from several countries (the majority of interviewees have come from Russia, Ukraine and Georgia, but a few additional individuals have come from other countries). I am interested in how they understand their professional development, in what new ways they construct their professional identity through the experiences of internationalisation.

However, the most basic concept directly underpinning this research perspective is that of internationalisation and it needs to be briefly introduced here. The concept of internationalisation is certainly often related to the discourse on globalisation and it may be perceived as just as vague, and just as problematic, or, just as omnipresent and ‘inevitable’ for change in institutional practices (Altbach and Teichler, 2001; Kwiek, 2001a). It has been seen

as subordinated to the new discourse of the globalised university (Britez and Peters, 2007) and as part of the more regional process of Europeanisation (Barblan, 2002).

In the most simple terms internationalisation in education is often seen as part of university's sector's answer to the pressures of globalising societies/economies and of globalising aspects of academic practice in some fields (Kalvemark and Van Der Wende, 1997: 27). But it has often been perceived as a process owned by the field of higher education and based on trust and collaboration and free exchange of academic ideas and scholars rather than competition for the international students (Kehm, 2003). Globalisation and internationalisation are certainly related to each other but they can also be distinguished from each other (Altbach and Knight, 2007), globalisation being a much wider and also much more socio-economic and technological process. A lot could be said about the overuse of the term and about its negative associations with the spread and dominance neo-liberal capitalism (and with the concept of academic capitalism) making the term problematic for theorists of educational research, especially in the post 2009 crisis situation. However, it is for that reason precisely that it continues to be an important concept for further inquiry (see, for example, the discussion offered by Popkewitz and Rizvi, 2010).

Internationalisation, until late nineties did not receive a major focus in discussions of higher education policy, though of course some aspects of internationalisation or of academic mobility have been important in various historical periods in terms of the development of university systems (for an overview, see Knight and De Witt, 1995; Kehm 2003). But a remarkable increase of attention to the issue and activity in this domain has taken place in the

last decade of 20th century prompting some researchers to consider it as the most prospective major new focus of university reform and transformation in the 21st century (Teichler, 1996 quoted in Van Der Wende, 1997: 15).

Indeed, internationalisation is often seen as a widespread, and an increasingly strategic process, impacting on all levels of higher education, from international transfer of educational policies and principles, through the internationalisation of practices and content of education, to staff and student mobility. The definition offered by Knight well illustrates this breadth of the concept: '[Internationalisation is] the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education. (Knight, 2004: 11)'.

The most taken for granted form of internationalisation is student exchange and study abroad (MacLoed and Wainwright, 2009; Teichler, 2004, 1999; Teichler and Jahr, 2001; Altbach and Teichler, 2001; Enders, 1998; Baron, 1993), particularly in the new European educational space. A study about the outcomes of short term Western European teaching staff exchange was carried out by Enders (1998), and, more recently by Janson et al (2009). An interesting comprehensive study is that of Welch (1997) which is based on an international survey undertaken by the Carnegie Foundation which was the basis for my own thinking about the issue.

In an Eastern European perspective, internationalisation, if we understand its most basic process to be that of academic mobility, involves primarily travel to Western (mostly Anglo-

Saxon) countries for education, research and academic work opportunities and short or long-term professional development programs. This is usually understood as contributing to the permanent loss of faculty or the so-called 'brain-drain' (Jalowiecki and Gorzelak, 2004) in the home country. Internationalisation is also often mentioned in relation to international programs run by Western donors and organisations aimed to provide models of change for educational institutions, academics and teaching practices and the curricula in Eastern European states (Elliot and Tudge, 2007; Iarskaia-Smirnova, 2006).

To some degree, this relationship of looking up to the West for 'best practice' is not specific to Eastern Europeans; it functions everywhere where a post-colonial or centre-periphery relationship between educational systems is present. The directions of individual development in international higher education require knowledge of English language, preferably combined with Western education or networks in English speaking countries. The direction of internationalisation is from East to West and from South to North. (Lander and Prichard, 2001: 242).

For the purpose of my research I understand internationalisation to involve a significant exposure of an academic to non-native educational systems, either through study or professional development in a foreign or international context. Focusing on this last type of internationalisation is a way to uncover new forms of academic identities and practices. This approach is not the one most common in higher education research on internationalisation. It is closest to the aspect of internationalisation categorised by De Wit as the 'competency approach' focusing on 'the human dimension' of 'developing new skill, attitudes, knowledge

in students, faculty and staff', which he does not think is connected to either 'academic activities' or 'organisational issues', that is , to an institutional focus (De Witt, 1995: 16-17). However, I see this approach as crucial for understanding both the process of organisational change and the activities of organisational actors- who are the internationalised academics and administrators themselves.

The research interest can be summarised in the following main questions:

R.Q. 1. How is the internationalisation process becoming embedded in academic identities?

R.Q.2. What are the effects of internationalisation on the academic's understanding of the professional practice, policy change and their position in higher education?

My interest includes general sociological, policy and practice dimensions, which are reflected in the research questions. The first question addresses the concept of internationalisation of academic identity in the most direct way in relation to the overall pattern of professional development and in relation to local (e.g. departmental or institutional) locations of practice as opposed to more global or de-territorialised locations of identity (for example in other institutions beyond own educational system or in global networks of colleagues). My interest is in how these different locations of identity will be integrated.

It needs to be pointed out at this point that one could also study the location of academic identity in its wider or 'horizontal' sociological aspects. No identity is constructed without relation to other aspects of self, such as gender, ethnicity, class, religion, and a whole array of

lifestyle choices and social identities. While this study is focused primarily on the formation of professional identities, as the researcher and the analyst of data, I need to be open to this broader aspect of identity construction as part of overall life experience of individuals.

The second preliminary research question attempts to link discourses of identity with discourses of practice, or to delineate how aspects of practice may emerge from newer identities. It is also related to my professional rather than sociological interest in actual academic work practices, habits, relationships with colleagues and students, and to classroom behaviour that internationalised academics may be adopting.

The second research question is also related to policy issues, and more specifically to the experience of policy change as evaluated and lived by the academics themselves. I am interested in the professionals' reflexive assessment of changes in higher education, their potential agency in these processes or perhaps their resistance to national and institutional directions in higher education.

The concept of internationalisation is further analysed in Chapters 1 and 2, and a further discussion of the research questions and research approaches is provided in Chapter 4.

The key elements of the methodological orientation.

This section takes up the question of theoretical and methodological orientation that underlies my approach to the object of study. In brief, I see this study as discourse-based, which in my case assumes a critical realist theoretical stance in order to theorise the research topic

(Fairclough, 2005). The methodological choices I have made in order to answer my research questions are meant to reflect this perspective. Therefore I aim for a qualitative, self-reflexive, discourse-oriented perspective which utilises the biographical and narrative research approaches combined with qualitative interview elements.

Discourse is a decisive element structuring the lives and experiences of individuals in society in late modernity, and therefore of primary importance as a lens also in educational research (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999: 4). The importance of discourse is part of the characterisation of the previously mentioned project of 'reflexive modernisation', necessitating the ongoing discursive construction of multiple and unstable identities. Some effects of educational realities can be studied outside of any focus on discourse but some of the most interesting and important issues are accessible for research or for understanding only through the medium of discourse. In this respect, I agree with (MacLure, 2003) notion of discourse as perhaps primary in the research process and product, though I adopt a critical epistemological stance that privileges the study based on discursive aspects of social reality without claiming that social reality is nothing but discourse (Fairclough, 2005). Most qualitative researches of education point out that there is no easy way to study educational realities outside of key discursive practices - such as dominant narratives in policy writing or persistent classroom interactions.

Discursive practices are understood as elements of social practice, they contribute to the ongoing creation of economic, political and social relations and are part of the ongoing contestation over their meaning (Fairclough, 2005: 3). Through discourse we constitute

subjectivities and social practices which become experienced as real, but which need to be created and recreated continuously in varied institutional and private settings. What matters is that these discursive practices have material effects for the participants and so discourse is much more than a play of signification (Fairclough, 2005). These practices constitute who we are, and who we aim to become, how organisations we work in function, how policies are designed and how they are enacted or contested.

An attention to discourse is a key element in my study both as a provider of models of understanding of my data and of appropriate methodological approaches.

In relation to identities in discourse I need a methodological approach to supplement or make possible the recording and analysis of discourses on identity and practice: this can be achieved by ethnographic methods at meso-level of institutions, by qualitative interviewing and by methods employing a narrative approach. The narrative or biographical approach relies on the study of life narratives, (Czarniawska, 2004; Miller, 2000) oral histories (Portelli, 1997; Passerini, 1987) and generally texts that emerge out of the biographical perspective of the researched individuals and also of the researcher herself. Life narrative interviews are seen as means to glimpse constructions of identity and of experience that are meaningful to the individual, and to the researcher.

According to Shacklock, narrative inquiry relies on the mutual construction of ‘storied accounts of lived experience’ which allows for the exercise of “sociological imagination” in

research and which can successfully connect to the analysis of institutional or structural aspects of the social processes (Shacklock and Thorp, 2005: 156):

The biographical narrative for me is a way to elicit a story of educational experience and academic identity in an open format allowing for the participants to choose aspects of self that are more important. In my research this is supplemented by additional interview questions, particularly regarding aspects of concrete professional practice and evaluations of institutional and systemic change.

Thus discourse is important in linking the global to the local and the local to the global processes. Life narratives and biographical research approaches add a methodology for looking at the subjectivity of the individual as a ‘storied’, discursive construction, worthy of being the primary focus of educational analysis.

More discussion on the concept of discourse in late modernity and different ways in which it figures in educational research will be undertaken in chapter 2 whereas a detailed discussion of the methodological approach will be undertaken in chapter 4.

Autobiography as part of research orientation.

In this last section of the introduction I briefly introduce my orientation to the project, which entails an analysis of my institutional positioning, my own particular academic orientation and aspects of my personal identity which are important in the research process.

My own professional role and educational background, or in other words, my own life narrative, is situated within a private, American, graduate school situated in Budapest, called Central European university. My university which forms the institutional context of my work started as new educational enterprise with a focus on social sciences and humanities dedicated to educating a new cadre of professionals for the region of Central and Eastern Europe. In this it forms part of the so-called Soros network of programs and institutions engaged in research, development and advocacy aimed at development of democracy and civil society (or of the neo-liberal order) in the region and beyond it. It is a multi-cultural and de-territorialised location classified as an American university, but also is located in Europe. In fact, my university is itself a location of a new 'transnational space' (Britez and Peters, 2007: 355). In the 1990s the University offered generous scholarships and high-level graduate programs, mainly on MA level. My own ongoing internationalisation story entered its key stage here as one of the students, who then stayed (as did many other graduates) to gain employment in this international context, and to pursue higher education in foreign institutions.

My own office, called Curriculum Resource Centre, is carrying out some of the educational work of sharing resources and practices of my university with academics working elsewhere in the region of Central and Eastern Europe. Our remit has been to help translate or adapt the Western approaches to curriculum and teaching for the purpose of Eastern European universities, by giving targeted resources, training and funding to individual academics, and occasionally to whole departments or to specific institutions (and in the process, internationalising them further.) In brief, our aim is to provide programs at least implicitly

focused on internationalisation of East European faculty members. Thus, I am actively engaged in internationalisation of the curriculum and teaching practices through my position in a specific, unique but and also potentially important institutional setting. My influence on academic identities and practices is achieved through content of programs I help develop or deliver and through educational values that underlie them, which can to a large extent be perceived as Western approaches to higher education pedagogy.

I have obviously chosen the topic of internationalisation as my focus because it has personal autobiographical and professional meaning and this personal positioning has played a part in my thinking on the topic, neither do my research methods and analyses of data exist outside of this specific autobiographical context. This does not mean that I am not going to be critical towards the meanings generated from experiences of internationalisation, but it does mean that I have to acknowledge and critically reflect on the situation that as a researcher of this topic I am, discursively and materially, also the product of the process I describe. A further analysis of this issue will be undertaken later on in the thesis, in the methodological chapter.

Chapter 1. Global and regional transformations in higher education policy and practice.

1.1 Locating the research in a large-scale policy context.

Educational studies often employ different analytical levels for research (Teichler, 2005), for example, the educational system level, the institutional level, and the individual practitioner level (Tight, 2003: 10-11). In contrast to this division, Marginson and Rhoades propose a ‘glonacal agency heuristic’, specifying the global, national and local levels of analysis as equally vital and mutually dependent (Marginson, 2004; Marginson and Rhoades, 2002: 288-289). My research will aim for the analysis of the global trends through individual experience in local contexts, but before I turn to the research questions I will first review the literature about change in higher education on the global, national and institutional levels, in the Western world, and Eastern Europe and Former Soviet Union respectively. The discussion of contemporary change mechanisms on these levels is of key importance in order to situate this research project and to establish my own orientation to the subject.

The aim of this chapter is not only to situate the discussion of change within these various levels and predominant conceptualisations of change but also to link the global to the local levels of analysis. Here, particularly, the level of practitioners is proposed as the central focus of the study, which is meant to allow an alternative viewpoint onto the global or national level policy discussions.

The convergence of, and connection between the individual agency and global processes is an understudied dimension of change in higher education research in general, and definitely in the context of the so called transitional countries or new post-socialist democracies in Europe. In my view, this level of analysis of change is still missing or not given adequate importance in trying to understand the causes and effects of the global or national processes. Such a focus is important as it adds a new perspective on policy change, and may provide different data and evaluations of change. It may also uncover contradictions and complications that other levels would bypass or understudy. The form of knowledge that can be created on the basis of such a focus should uncover the meanings of educational change as experienced by the practitioners as opposed to the meanings derived from policy-based generalisations.

This chapter proceeds by discussing current trends in higher education change in industrialised Western countries and following that, the following chapter will address change in the far less theorised contexts of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

1.2 The view from above: global and national system level.

The most researched level of the debate on change concerns the whole of the educational system, whether envisaged as a specific national system, or an abstracted ‘idealised’ system or type of higher education (Tight, 2003: 11). The other levels are often seen as deriving from or being generalisable on the basis of processes seen at the national level. This research and

theorisation strategy was criticised as inadequate by Marginson and Rhoades (2002: 285) but remains the dominant focus in studies of higher education policy and change.

Some of the current explanations or classifications of change in higher education are related to the advance of globalisation (Marginson, 2006; King, 2004; Beerkens, 2003; Currie and Newson, 1998; Slaughter and Leslie, 1997) or internationalisation (Qiang, 2003; Enders and Fulton, 2002). These processes are taken to occur in a new higher education context, and are contributing to producing such a context. The developments are usually equated with the policy discourse of the so called 'knowledge-society' (David and Foray, 2003), which is a term used in current mainstream educational policy writing in order to link the traditional role of universities (knowledge production and dissemination and training of country elites) with the needs of economic development of a given country (including the training of flexible knowledge workers, knowledge management, innovation, enterprise, etc).

Knowledge society is derived from earlier studies of the post-industrial society (Bell, 1974: 37) a concept that encompasses profound changes in social structures, use and form of knowledge and symbolic culture. The most visible of these changes are the growth of service industry, of white collar workers and the management professionals, a rise in the complexity and technological basis of knowledge and its application by knowledge based professionals, as well as an increasingly individualistic and consumerist culture (Bell, 1974: 12, 14). In the current usage by policy makers the term 'knowledge society' denotes increasing belief in the value of education and training for economic growth of the country, through the concept of human capital formation, research and product innovation and flexible, entrepreneurial,

competitive life-long learners. David and Foray (2003: 21-23) present an overview of the economic basis of the term 'knowledge society', pointing to the rise of the value of intangible (including human skills) capital over tangible capital, new instruments of knowledge production, the centrality and speed of innovation in production. Education, seen in this light, becomes a commodity to be used by governments as a resource for economic development (Naidoo, 2003: 249).

Thus, if we consider the national system of analysis of higher education change, the basic issue is the development of systems able to sustain knowledge society. Within national systems, such as the UK, there is a strong policy drive to link the notion of knowledge society with higher education policy making, but there are many contradictions of this process as pointed out by Delanty (2003) and its effects on universities and knowledge production and dissemination need more nuanced studies (Naidoo, 2003). In a system striving towards the knowledge society we witness a simultaneous push from policy makers for massification of access and for increased quality of learning, a move to foster innovation and create the entrepreneurial university, combined with a requirement for ongoing quality assurance or self-regulation. Quite incongruously, these increased expectations for innovation and widening access of students often come hand in hand with a severely decreased level of public spending on universities and an expectation that universities can become entrepreneurial in and of themselves, attracting more students and more resources for their functioning.

1.3 Globalisation

Globalisation is a key issue in research on educational change, yet it is a complex and vague concept whose explanatory and ideological appeal needs to be disentangled in order for it to be critically assessed. Several authors have pointed out the vagueness or overuse of the term and have attempted to provide their own specification of how globalisation actually relates to higher education systems or institutions (Marginson, 2006; Altbach, 2005; Douglass, 2005, 2004; Beerkens, 2003). Globalisation is usually employed in two ways in discussions of change in higher education. In the first instance, its various aspects are evoked as currently the most significant cause of educational transformation on all levels. As Slaughter and Leslie point out: 'the changes currently taking place are as great as the changes in academic labour which occurred in the second half of nineteenth century (...) the globalisation of the political economy at the end of the twentieth century is destabilising patterns of university professional work developed over the past hundred years (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997: 208)'. The predominant explanation for this is the appearance of international financial markets which undermine the economic role of the state and force the adoption of neo-liberal policies in the public sphere which strengthen the role of market forces and result in competition for resources, both domestic and international (Burbules and Torres, 2000: 15, Slaughter and Leslie, 1997: 7). In this understanding, globalisation is understood as marketisation (a rise of market-related behaviour in academia), and as leading to academic capitalism, a situation in which academics are asked to act as partially public sector employees and partially, as independent entrepreneurs (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997).

If globalisation is not employed as an explanatory starting point for change it is evoked as its inevitable end-result, a future state of affairs caused by the global economic trends. This second way of understanding globalisation is mainly employed by policy makers and in actual educational policy writing as a justification of the proposed national level solutions, giving it a distinctly 'normative' appeal. But such a stance is sometimes visible also in research on higher education (e.g. Kwiek, 2001a). In this context, Marginson and Rhoades (2002: 281) critique higher education research for understudying and under-theorising globalisation: 'global forces are not so much analysed or theorised as they are identified'. Globalisation is reported as being ideologically suspect, vague and prescriptive (Enders and Fulton, 2002: 4-5); it is critiqued for being put forward as undifferentiated, unavoidable, unchallengeable (Currie and Newson, 1998: 10).

Globalisation is most often understood as a configuration of economic, cultural and educational forces amounting to a rise of academic capitalism (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997). This means an increasing orientation to global markets and international students as a source of wealth for developed countries, which begin to function as global educational providers. The predominant economic bases of globalisation can be understood in neoliberal, neo-Keynesian or neo-Marxist terms, but whether the market itself, mobility of capital, or the rise of multinationals and international business class is taken as the main cause, the effect of globalisation on higher education seems to be the rise of academic capitalism (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997: 14). Globalisation, therefore, can be understood as a set of conditions leading to neo-liberal policy making in education causing academic capitalism in university practice, and to increasingly managerialist tendencies in the administration of universities.

There is considerable agreement that globalisation does lead to restructuring of some aspects of higher education provision on a global level, changing the nature of relations between institutions and leading to change in institutional structures. Marginson (2006: 27-28) points out the unequal but visible rise of an international market in higher education:

Above the national hierarchy in every nation now looms the American doctoral sector and the leading UK universities. Few people in each nation know the higher education systems of other nations but the peaks of global status are visible everywhere. Although the national and global hierarchies are imperfectly integrated, they now constitute a single set of possibilities for a growing number of students and their parents (they have long been seen this way by faculty and many graduate students). Globalisation in this account equals the creation of a separate tier of global competition in higher education, dominated by English culture and English-language universities.

We can certainly understand globalisation in education as related to the creation of global educational provision or of a global market (in addition to the still existing national markets) (Marginson, 2006). It can also be understood as the establishment and maintenance of global academic core and periphery in research and in terms of university status (Marginson, 2006; Altbach, 2005). Robertson and Dale specify the impact of globalisation on education as transformations of policy ideologies, changes in resourcing of higher education (leading to different human and material capacity of institutions) and changes in the governance of the sector or in management relations (Robertson and Dale, 2007: 2). In even broader terms, Vaira understands globalisation as a defining concept, or ‘an institutionalised cultural account

which describes reality' of the current period in higher education, leading to partial homogenisation of policy-making, governance, organisation and also of academic work and identity (Vaira, 2004: 485). The last two aspects of the process will be of particular interest to me when analysing the international experiences of academics in my study.

Globalisation in higher education goes hand in hand with the rise of academic capitalism, that is the profit principle entering the management of higher education teaching and research which leads to global competition for resources. Obviously, this assessment has many sceptics. Bleiklie, for example, points out that there are still many differences between the majority of higher education systems and the market in goods, in other words, the public nature of universities continues, to some extent, despite the intrusion of quasi-market conditions (Bleiklie, 2005: 51-52). The contradictions between business enterprises and educational institutions are well outlined by McMurty (1991, quoted by Bache, 2006: 234) who speaks of diametrically different goals, motivations, and methods of work and standards of excellence. Naidoo (2003) argues for the analysis of higher education as a grouping of semi-independent fields of practice that display particular internal dynamics not easily translatable into business language. This being said, it is obvious that the academic capitalism as a principle has become a dominant ideological influence at least in educational policy writing and in the common rhetoric of administrators (Bleiklie, 2005: 51) and, as such, may lead to different (if highly problematic and sometimes contested) ways of being and acting. Therefore, for current sociology of education research, the question is: to what extent academic capitalism has in fact encroached into higher education practices and into ways of being that characterise the higher education practitioners? My own study may also consider

some aspects of such processes from the point of view of individual identity and practice of the academic professionals under study.

In addition to explanations of globalisation as the main thrust of change in higher education, some authors distinguish between economic, cultural and technological aspects of globalisation. Thus, globalisation can be seen as the main umbrella process seen in economic terms (David and Foray, 2003) and, more widely, as a cultural and social transformation (Olssen et al., 2004: 4-8). For example, Currie states that it is important to distinguish between globalisation as a process that has made communication instant and encouraged people to think in more global terms, and a conception of globalisation that combines market ideology with a corresponding set of practices taken from the world of business (Currie and Newson, 1998: 1). Others would see technological advances and the resulting progress in transport and communication as part of the same all-encompassing transformation: 'The essence of today's globalisation lies in the combination of global transformations in political economy with global transformations in communications and culture' (Marginson, 2006: 5).

Another important point is that globalisation is a process driven by particular global institutions with distinct spheres of influence and activities. The World Trade Organisation (WTO), World Bank, the OECD and the EU are often mentioned as key agents (Marginson, 2006: 1; Marginson and Rhoades, 2002: 296). These organisations through their financial resources, programs, and through the developed concepts and indicators shape the ideologies and expectations of other policy makers, particularly on the national level. It is interesting to note that on this level, researchers already point to the individual agency of elite professionals

as key force in terms of both shaping and resisting international organisations and global trends: ‘but there can be no global flows of people, money, messages, ideas and policies without globalizing and globalised human agents’ (Marginson, 2006: 1). Some of the similarities between the policies of various international organisations are also suggested to be a result of flows of personnel and the agency of the elite professionals (Marginson and Rhoades, 2002: 297).

In general, it seems that globalisation does provide one key concept of change in higher education that is connected to reorientation, or as Vaira (2004: 485) puts it ‘de-institutionalisation and re-institutionalisation’ of values and policies in academic institutions, systems, identities and academic work practices, leading to the advance of academic capitalism and the dominance of English and Anglo-Saxon universities. It is also a concept that clearly demarcates the resulting inequalities and newer hierarchies created among institutions positioned differently in relation to the forces of globalisation.

Another important aspect of globalisation that is of use for my research relates to the key discussion around the convergence or homogenisation of practice and policy and management discourses. Beerkens (2003: 130) points out several distinct concepts or discourses that are being quickly ‘exported’ among institutions of higher education world-wide such as ‘the entrepreneurial university’, ‘new public management’, or ‘student-centred learning’. The more recent drive towards placing the universities higher within global university rankings (Marginson and Van der Wende, 2007) in order to achieve the status of ‘world class university’ for some flagship institutions is also part of the same trend (Deem, Mok and

Lucas, 2008). This spreading of new dominant concepts related to the university purpose and function from Western university systems is something that my own analysis will be concerned with, and this aspect of globalisation will be discussed further.

1.4 Internationalisation

Internationalisation, unlike globalisation, whose roots lay in several social science disciplines, has been the concept coined and extensively used specifically within educational research for a number of years (Teichler, 2004; De Wit, 2002; Enders and Fulton, 2002: 2; Knight and De Wit, 1995). In higher education studies, internationalisation is usually preferred to globalisation, as it has a tradition as a topic of research, being perceived as a domain of concrete educational and organisational practices with a considerable history preceding globalisation as a phenomenon (Altbach, 2005; De Wit, 2002; Knight and De Wit, 1995). The distinction of internationalisation from globalisation is particularly visible in the considerable amount of literature produced from the point of view and aimed for the use of university administrators (e.g. Nilsson, 2003). Knight is accredited with producing a comprehensive definition of internationalisation as an institutional phenomenon: 'Internationalisation of higher education is the process of integrating international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service function of the institution (Knight, 1994, quoted in De Wit and Knight, 1999: 16).

The literature on internationalisation in higher education is by now very extensive and it is summarised by De Wit (2002) in terms of historical, political, regional and conceptual differences or varying motivations and rationales. A more recent overview of available research is presented by Kehm and Teichler (2007) who point to the continuing importance of this research agenda and increasing theoretical sophistication of approaches undertaken by scholars from various disciplines. A much broader literature review is compiled by Dolby and Rahman (2008) who distinguish the research on internationalisation from that on comparative and international education and more recent research on globalisation in education. Globalisation and regionalisation (Europeanisation) are considered to be the core underlying or related policy processes (De Wit, 2002).

The majority of studies of internationalisation of higher education are basically descriptive in nature, aiming at categorisation or evaluation of various specific programs such as student exchange or international mobility programs, research collaboration among universities, joint-degrees and off-shore educational provision (Altbach and Knight, 2007; Altbach and Teichler, 2001; Barblan, 2002). Much of this literature on internationalisation is directed towards policy analysis and aims to inform policy makers and administrators (Dolby and Rahman, 2008) or to evaluate policy and specific programs (e.g. Van der Wende, 2007; Luijten-Lub et al., 2005; Kalvemark and Van der Wende, 1997).

However, because of its ongoing perceived relevance in research and practice, the actual use of the term ‘internationalisation’ in higher education research is so wide that it raises the issue of a possible lack of adequate theorisation of the concept (Britez and Peters, 2007: 356). In

particular, more recent discussions on the relationship of the term with globalisation suggest that it is either over-used, or not adequately theorised:

One might ask in this context, how the terms internationalisation and globalisation relate to each other. Are they opposites? Do they express gradual differences on a continuum? Or are they related to each other dialectally in a way that every border-crossing leads to somewhat of a crumbling of borders, and that every global pressure leads to a national border-construction activity? (Teichler, 2004: 7)

The different possible scales of internationalisation are well captured by Bartell:

The reality, then, is that internationalization conveys a variety of understandings, interpretations and applications, anywhere from a minimalist, instrumental and static view, such as securing external funding for study abroad programs, through international exchange of students, conducting research internationally, to a view of internationalization as a complex, all encompassing and policy-driven process, integral to and permeating the life, culture, curriculum and instruction, as well as research activities of the university and its members. (Bartell, 2003: 46)

Moreover, internationalisation could also be related to the cultural, technological and educational aspects of globalisation, where technological advancement and the resulting shrinking of space, the advancement of English as a global language, and a certain type of multiculturalism have meant more interest in cooperation and transfer of ideas in education (Marginson, 2006; Currie and Newson, 1999: 1; Enders and Fulton, 2002: 5; Spring, 1998: 7).

Alternatively, internationalisation can equally be seen as an integral part of the contemporary stage of globalisation in higher education, as can be seen in Marginson (2006: 28): ‘ global competition offers all institutions a new set of strategic options, identities and development paths. They might create international research partnerships, double-badged degrees, ICT-based linkages, foreign education as a business, and/or a cosmopolitan curriculum’. Issues reported by Enders and Fulton (2002: 5) that link globalisation to internationalisation include: ‘advances in information technology, greater capital flow across borders, international mobility of labour or of students, new public management and the weakening of nation states, credit transfer and the international recognition of degrees’. This trend to list a number of processes that can be classified either as internationalisation or as globalisation is present in other accounts as well (e.g. Douglas, 2005).

Bartell suggests that globalisation could be seen as a next phase of internationalisation of universities. This refers to a process by which universities first open to international dimension in teaching, research and student and staff mobility (internationalisation) in order to help fulfil better their local and national needs and then move to a process where they function on an increasingly global market, rather like multinational companies (Bartell, 2003: 47). Teichler also suggests a movement or a series of ‘quantum leaps’ to large-scale policy change, often at the level of the nation state and the international system which affects entire educational systems (Teichler, 1999). This understanding is reflected in the more recent definition of internationalisation by Knight (2004: 11) as ‘the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education’.

Internationalisation had for a while been considered a benign process, a sphere of cooperation on equal terms rather than competition or subordination to the Western global brands in education (Enders and Fulton, 2002: 6). In this understanding, internationalisation appeared as a kind of defence by the university sector towards globalisation. Usually, internationalisation is understood as simply opening up of educational systems, institutions and programs to international cooperation and mobility. This perspective is widespread among researchers remaining within the paradigm of nation states as main actors in education, rather than challenging the place of the nation state in educational research (e.g. Scott, 1998; De Wit and Knight, 1999; Knight and De Witt 1995).

Not all studies of internationalisation assume an oversimplified and largely descriptive focus. For example, in an earlier study, Kalvemark and Van Der Wende conceptualise the novelty of internationalisation as a new dimension to the Clark's triangle of coordination in higher education noting how state, academic oligarchy and the market might all be re-defined in and by the international dimension (Clark, 1983; quoted in Kalvemark and Van Der Wende, 1997).

We may draw the conclusion that globalisation and internationalisation are related, though not completely overlapping concepts. Internationalisation is a wider concept, by which I mean that it is both more specific to education and more descriptively rich than globalisation. Globalisation is a deeper concept with more explanatory power as it allows us to conceptualise newer identities and organisational formations such as 'the managed university'

(Becher and Trowler, 2001) or ‘the entrepreneurial university’ (Clark, 1998: 3-4) or the emergence of academic capitalism (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997). To put it simply, globalisation may be one of the concepts that explain to us why universities internationalise, whereas internationalisation shows us how they globalise. In this way my perspective is different from researchers of internationalisation who sometimes understand globalisation and Europeanisation as the ‘how’ of internationalisation (e.g. De Wit, 2002).

In summarising the literature on internationalisation regarding the macro policy context it remains to be said that internationalisation, rather like globalisation, is always local, and often relies on the creation of quite unequal policy transfer settings more than on the principle of inter-university collaboration. In researching internationalisation, the role of the particular university in the national system is paramount for predicting institutional variation (Marginson, 2006).

For the smaller, less central, or less developed countries aspects of internationalisation may have a neo-colonial implication, making it a much less innocent concept (Deem, Mok and Lucas, 2008). The links between some aspects of internationalisation and globalisation and the legacy of colonialism were strongly asserted by Spring (1998) and are clearly visible in some qualitative studies of internationalisation (Dixon, 2006). Increasingly, internationalisation denotes a predominance of international activities with an orientation to the Anglo-Saxon academic world and relying on the global(ising) character of English (Marginson, 2006; Deem, Mok and Lucas, 2008). These aspects of internationalisation are best studied when we consider research dealing with more micro policy issues and with the

practice dimensions, such as in research concerning individual universities (e.g. Nilsson, 2003; De Jong and Teekens, 2003; Stohl, 2007) or programs (Dixon, 2006). The perspectives focused on the individual practitioner and those generated by individual practitioners are vital in researching these aspects of internationalisation (e.g. Stohl, 2007).

I am more particularly interested in internationalisation understood as the connection between international mobility of academics and their professional identities. It is interesting to note that this aspect, although mentioned in policy writing and increasingly taken for granted, indeed expected, in international rankings of universities (Deem, Mok and Lucas, 2008; Marginson and Van der Wende, 2007) is not discussed nearly as much as student mobility in terms of actual research. There are few existing studies discussing international experiences and identities of researchers or teachers in various international contexts (Hamza, 2010; Huang, 2009; Demir, Aksu and Paykoc, 2000; Sandgren et al., 1999). Some studies based on European Community academic exchange programs (ERASMUS) were carried out by Enders (1998) and more recently by Janson, Schomburg and Teichler (2009) and some predictions about the future increase of academics' mobility have been made recently (Hoffman, 2008).

1.5 Europeanisation

Many studies of aspects of the process of internationalisation could equally be understood as accounts of the Europeanisation of education, particularly understood as European Union-authored or, more generally, Europe-generated, international projects and emerging policy frameworks (De Wit, 2003).

Europeanisation is a concept borrowed from political science, where it denotes adjustments of individual countries' laws, policies and government practices and institutions to the frameworks developed by the European Union, usually as part of the process of European Union integration or subsequent to it (Radaelli, 2004; Olsen, 2002). This means that it normally applies to policy areas that can be partially transferred from the (EU member) nation-state to the European institutions' level.

The term itself needs further elaboration since it may appear equally as contested as globalisation when applied in relation to education. Europeanisation is usually seen as a specific type of regionalisation (Dale and Robertson, 2002) and, in turn, as part of the more 'benign' cooperative understanding of the internationalisation of education (Scott, 1998). The activities subsumed under it focus on moves to support mobility of students and staff across the European higher education space (Teichler and Jahr, 2001), cooperation in curriculum building and degree design, and the development of the 'European dimension of education' (Teichler, 1999: 12; Bache 2006), or quality control mechanisms (Gonzalez and Wagenaar, 2003: 243). More critical assessments of Europeanisation process as akin to globalisation and serving the same larger economising and social redesign goals are also present (Robertson, 2006; Howlett, 2006; Huisman and Van der Wende, 2004).

The concept of Europeanisation is considered both highly relevant and, sometimes, under-theorised and severely overused (Olsen, 2002: 923-924), which is why care needs to be taken in considering what is meant by it in relation to education. Olsen provides a multi-level

definition where Europeanisation consists of several different strands of change, such as change in Europe's territorial boundaries through enlargement, development of European level institutions, penetration of national and sub-national level of policy making by European systems of governance, exporting European forms of political organisation to other countries. These are all potentially related to the project of making Europe a stronger and more unified political entity (Olsen, 2002: 924).

Radaelli (2004: 4) also distinguishes between top-down (reactive) and bottom up (creative) forms of Europeanisation and corresponding research approaches for measuring it. Wallace (2004) points out that the process of Europeanisation does not produce convergence: divergent political and policy answers may be even more common. This is strikingly similar to the argument of Bleiklie considering the effects of possible integration of educational systems as resulting in divergent outcomes (Bleiklie, 2005). Furthermore, Wallace does not equate Europeanisation with the EU, rather arguing that EU itself is an outcome of the process of Europeanisation (Wallace, 2000: 371). Finally, Europeanisation is understood as affecting in different ways, countries outside of EU and also on the margin of or outside of Europe (Wallace, 2000: 371). Perhaps a more inclusive and complex definition is offered by Radaelli (2004: 3):

Europeanisation consists of processes of a) construction, b) diffusion and c) institutionalisation of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things' and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the EU policy process and then incorporated into the logic of domestic (national and sub-national) discourse, political structures and policies.

In relation to education, there are also many different ways of conceiving of Europeanisation. Bache (2006: 233) understands it as ‘a process of enhanced co-operation and coordination at the European level’ among states, taking as a case study the potential for adoption of a common core curriculum of European studies among universities. He also sees the process as a two-way pressure of ‘downloading of European level decisions’ and ‘uploading’ of domestic preferences and solutions.

It would seem that in higher education, there can be no direct uploading of laws or policies, as higher education is formally still outside the scope of EU legal framework and resides within the jurisdiction of the nation state. The reason for this is that education is very closely linked to nationhood and cultural independence or even sovereignty of nation states and thus, at least previously, it was very difficult for European Union to influence it through hard policy measures (Livingston, 2003; Lange and Alexiadou, 2007). However Livingston has pointed out that if we take the amount of European level cooperation, networks, meetings and communications in the field, European education policy has existed ‘in all but the name’ for a long time (Livingston, 2003: 588), while De Wit claims that through programs and incentives (ERASMUS and SOCRATES programs are the most obvious examples) it may be said to have existed for over 30 years (De Wit, 2003: 161).

An alternative explanation for the uneasy equation of Europeanisation with education (and higher education) is that education has initially not been included within the sphere of any form of market influence in Europe, and therefore the economically driven initial interests of the EU were not linked to educational policy until more recently. This state of affairs is seen

as profoundly changing as the logic of knowledge-based society charged with the production of wealth through applied research, skills-training, innovation and flexible workforce is spreading and quasi-market relations are beginning to be enacted in educational fields (Lange and Alexiadou, 2007; Lawn, 2001). Lawn sees the creation of the European education policy as an exercise in the construction of new European cultural identity and a new 'imagined community' in which education, training, research and innovation are the established pillars (Lawn, 2003).

In actual policy terms, two processes are usually understood as key components of the new emerging European policy context: the European Union initiated Lisbon agenda, (Livingston, 2003) and the Bologna process, covering a much greater number of countries of the Council of Europe. The Lisbon agenda encourages cooperation in education and training; greater access to education and recognition of degrees granted by other EU nations, increased diversification, cross-fertilisation with business sectors, increased innovation in programs of study and research, the introduction of new funding and management approaches (e.g. Commission of European Communities, 2006). The overriding purpose is 'modernisation' to achieve increased competitiveness of the European university in order to help European Union become 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world' (Commission of European Communities, 2003: 2). The Lisbon agenda has been associated with the promotion of better access to education and training, recognition of degrees, a focus of life-long learning, investment in research and communication technologies.

The Bologna process, started by the signing of Bologna Declaration by 29 ministers of Education in 1999, aimed at creating the European Higher Education Area by 2010 through harmonisation of degree structures, creation of a recognisable three cycle university degree system, promotion of student mobility and the adoption of common system of credits for university courses. (De Wit, 2006). This action was undertaken with the initially indirect support of European Union and thus seems a form of soft or 'ultra-soft' form of European influence on the national policies (Nagel, 2007; Bache, 2006). On the other hand, the resulting changes in higher education laws and quality assurance mechanism are overhauling entire educational systems at least as regards the degree cycles. The initially soft agreements on benchmarking, indicators, comparability of educational architecture and cooperation in quality assurance are also changing the higher education landscape (Barkholt, 2005; Wachter, 2004; Tauch, 2004; Van der Wende and Westerheijden, 2001).

Both of these policy areas can be seen as ideologically and practically converging (De Wit, 2006). However, the Bologna process is more important to consider further since it concerns the countries of Easter Europe and former Soviet Union, as well as those of Central and South-East Europe that are now part of the EU.

The adding, widening, and deepening of the goals of the Bologna process can be gauged from the series of voluntary agreements produced by the participating actors, which include the Bologna Declaration of June 19, 1999, Prague Communiqué of 2001, Berlin Communiqué of 2003 and Bergen Communiqué of 2005. The effects of the process so far are agreements on the introduction of two cycles of higher education (first undergraduate and postgraduate) to

which later the doctoral cycle was added; the increasing agreement on the overall length of university study (3+2+3 year for each cycle, though with many exceptions in particular national systems), the agreement on cooperation and common standards in Quality Assurance for higher education, on the use of ECTS-compatible credit transfer systems, moves towards modularisation of curricula in order to enhance mobility, student choice, and lifelong-learning, and notably, the promotion of European dimension in higher Education (Wachter 2004, De Wit, 2006).

In another understanding of Europeanisation, the Bologna process is a supranational policy discourse adopted by the national governments, who are aiming to maintain strong national control over the education and at the same time to modernise it and be able to spend less, rather than more, on funding it. Much of the policy influence is actually exerted by national governments pursuing their own economising or modernising agendas in education using Bologna as a rhetorical leverage, and these policy-initiatives are supported by regular international meetings of expert groups, and the production of relevant comparisons and benchmarks. This understanding would suggest that there has been little convergence of actual educational practice or formats but much window dressing or purely formal change in order to look and be perceived as part of the club of Bologna-compatible nations (Howlett, 2006).

The Bologna process is also increasingly linked to EU as it is conceived as part of the creation of European Higher Education Area and EU has increasingly taken a more active role as an important supporter and coordinator of the actions (Nagel, 2007; Howlett, 2006; Bache,

2006). In this sense, Bache (2006: 239) states that the European higher education agendas developed during the Bologna Process may be ‘beyond but not outside the EU’, and may be used for further promotion of European integration and European identity.

The debate on the nature of the process and on degree of possible integration, convergence, harmonisation as opposed to recognition and cooperation based on diversity and limited convertibility among systems continues (Wachter, 2004; Ahola and Mesikammen, 2003; Kwiek, 2004). But whether or not linked directly to the EU, the Bologna process is considered as an example of Europeanisation, at least in the sense of a particular form of regionalisation. This is clearly suggested by Nagel:

With reference to the Bologna- Process a broad understanding of “Europe” and “Europeanisation” is required both in political and geographical terms. Besides the EU member-states the process also comprises Turkey and the Russian Federation as well as Armenia and Azerbaijan. Nevertheless, the process is European by provenience and shape, which is in fact one of the rationales for non-member-states to join, thus to navigate themselves into the scope of European politics. (Nagel, 2007: 3)

What is as important as the degree of Europeanisation within this policy process is also its link to economic agendas of market integration and competitiveness. Tomusk (2004) and others (Neave, 2005; Bache, 2006; Huisman and Van der Wende, 2004) point out a marked shift in the meaning of the Bologna process seen as the specific policy agenda of Europeanisation. Initially the process is construed in the original document on the grounds of defence of cultural and educational heritage of Europe, very much against the perceived threat

of globalisation and the subsequent loss of cultural heritage and educational variety (Bologna Declaration, 1999). Tomusk critiques the process as increasingly taken over by purely political agenda of strengthening the coherence of the European Union as an entity and even more explicitly, by its economic agenda (Tomusk, 2004: 77-78). Barkholt (2005) sees the Bologna process as a form of European integration of higher education institutions, and one based predominantly on economic needs: either due to a 'spillover' from the economic integration already taking place, and also, as a way in which governments can use supranational agreement to increase 'quality' by forcing institutions to compete internationally. The majority view is that a new global market in education is being envisaged in which Europe's universities are competing for foreign and internal students with the strongest players in the field (Enders and Fulton, 1998: 6; Wan Der Wende, 2000: 309; Huisman and Van Der Wende, 2004: 350; Barkholt, 2005). There are also opposing voices and opposing readings of the history of the process suggesting that the Bologna process has in fact diluted the push towards competitiveness with the presence of widening participation and social justice concerns (Wachter, 2004: 272). In the most current context of post-financial crisis cuts that threaten further many academic disciplines and universities across Europe with further significant reduction of state funds, the economising drive is likely to get even more pronounced.

The question then still remains of what is the best way of distinguishing between globalisation (in its economic and other aspects), internationalisation, and Europeanisation as either concepts or processes? Are they sequential, a relationship of scale, related political and educational policy processes? Such a discussion of these three key change processes is carried

out by Marginson (2006: 3), who considers their mutual influence and possible partial difference:

Internationalisation and globalisation are understood here as distinct from each other but inter-penetrated with each other: with each creating conditions of possibility for the other. In other words, the relationship between them is dialectical but not dualistic. Similarly to the above, some aspects of Europeanisation are considered to constitute globalisation rather than being opposed to it.

The multiple relationships between the three processes described above are indeed hard to separate but I will argue that the multiple activities and processes that go under the name of internationalisation are largely the means or answers to the larger policies of Europeanisation and globalisation. The relationship is not sequential or parallel it is a 'means' and 'ends' understanding. Thus, internationalisation emerges as educational change in the service of political and economic agendas or as an educational interpretation of them. Universities internationalise in order to globalise or Europeanise, or because they are influenced by these 'policy technologies', even if the practitioners on the ground do not necessarily see it this way. Internationalisation of faculty members' practices is clearly part of this understanding, as demonstrated by Smedby and Trondal's (2005) survey of Norwegian faculty's international travel, research cooperation, co-authorship with foreign academics and publishing in English. Their quantitative data (from 1981, 1991, 2000) 'point towards an increased European *and* global orientation' of faculty across all fields of study leading them to conclude that 'the globalisation and Europeanisation hypothesis seems to be supplementary rather than contrary' (Smedby and Trondal, 2005: 458).

However, looked at from the level of the institution, internationalisation has a more functional meaning since it can be equated with specific and varied educational activities and becomes a way in which individuals and institutions experience or engage in Europeanisation or globalisation. This means that there will be differences in practices and outcomes of internationalisation at the level of institutions and practitioners. In summary, we can paraphrase a point made by Douglas (2005) about globalisation, to say that all internationalisation is local. Or, in Marginson's (2004) terms, it is “glonacal”, it means that institutions placed differently in the national system will have different histories, hierarchical relationships, cultures and potentialities to engage in internationalisation with very different effects. This concerns institutions and sub-institutional structures, not to mention individual practitioners located in different institutional contexts. Therefore, a study of any of the above processes needs to look at the level below the national higher education system. This understanding is central for my research and helps direct it towards the most relevant conceptual or theoretical perspectives and will therefore be considered further.

1.6 The view from below: transformations on the local level.

To say that universities are changing in response to new pressures and contextual factors is not to diminish their role in transforming these pressures in multiple ways and with very significant differences. Thus, universities respond differently to globalisation (or Europeanisation) in different countries (Currie and Newson, 1998); universities within one country do not uniformly follow a pattern of policy-induced change (Trowler, 2002). We can witness a diversification of effects and models between different types of institutions and

within individual institutions. This is precisely why Marginson and Rhoades (2002: 286) point out to the local element of the 'glonacal agency heuristic' where local refers to institutions and agents (human and organisational). This is also why Deem asks the question: 'is the local dimension still important' in relation to the reported change processes such as managerialism, globalisation, academic capitalism and entrepreneurialism (Deem, 2001). How local institutions and agents become entrepreneurial or global players is not adequately explored in the literature and the studies that do exist, often 'remain suspended on the national level, overlooking local responses and variations' (Marginson and Rhoades, 2002: 286). There have been a few institutional case studies of internationalisation in recent years, for example the practitioner-authored studies of 'internationalisation at home' in selected Western European universities (De Jong and Teekens, 2003; Nilsson, 2003). This focus allows for different sets of questions to be raised and potentially explored related to the effectiveness of policy and its implementation by institutions (Trowler, 2002: 3-7; Kogan, 2002: 56).

For researchers of institutions, trends that are part and parcel of globalisation or Europeanisation take on specific meanings in particular higher education contexts. Apart from internationalisation discussed earlier, the policy trends which affect institutions include the demands of massification, the question of system steering and universities' answer to it by specific management practices (new managerialism). These trends are leading to the rise in the executive-professional staff leading university decisions, a focus on excellence and accountability and a more instrumental view of the curriculum, and a change of perceived

value and volume of research production (Teichler, 2003; Kogan and Hanney, 2000; Scott, 1998, 2005).

To some extent, these changes can be understood as part of growing academic capitalism in the context of post-Fordist industrial relations, where economic reasoning and managerial tendencies take over the previously public service understanding of education (Scott, 1995: 91). Whether or not academic capitalism and managerialism are the same process or distinct regimes (Bleiklie, 2005: 51), the essential outcome is the ‘encroachment of the profit motive into the academy’ (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997: 9). This leads to the popularity of entrepreneurial models (Clark 1998; discussed in Deem 2001; Clark 2005) and serious changes in university structures and governance (Rhoades and Slaughter, 1997), such as the focus on performance indicators and outputs and various forms of strategic management (Becher and Trowler, 2001: 10; Blackmore and Sachs, 2001: 46). The result could also be an increasingly part-time and managed profession of university lecturer, and an increasingly capitalistic and commodified relationship between educators and students (Rhoades and Slaughter, 1997).

These pressures are usually summarised as a rise of the ‘entrepreneurial university’ or ‘the managed university’ in which the executive power of academic and professional managers has risen and the power of collegial governance has decreased. In the European context universities have been given more autonomy but have been expected to transform themselves into more professionally and strategically managed educational enterprises engaging in the generation of wealth (Meek, 2003; Williams and Kitaev, 2005).

Academic capitalism and entrepreneurialism, not to mention globalisation, translate themselves into different opportunities and costs when we go below the level of the institution and consider academic departments as locations for different disciplinary programs: even within the same institution different departments gain and lose their resources as a result of reorganisation and strategic planning (Rhoades and Slaughter, 1997). In relation to internationalisation among faculty members in one country, Smedby and Trondal (2005) were able to see clear disciplinary differences, even if the overall level of internationalisation has increased across the universities. Teaching oriented faculties and graduate research centres in the same discipline may also see very different effects.

The most ‘local’ level of analysis concerning change in contemporary higher education would be to look primarily at the individual academic level and to study the changing aspects of academic work. As Rhoades and Slaughter (1997: 9) point out: ‘Academic capitalism, the increased management of professionals, and supply-side higher education policies are not disembodied systems and structures, they are lived experiences, deeply embedded in peoples’ daily worlds in colleges and universities’. This is clearly stated by Marginson and Rhoades who point out that ‘policy analyses should attend to policy implementation at various levels, down to the professionals who enact and formulate policies in the ways that ration their time and organise their activity (Marginson and Rhoades, 2002: 286).

Importantly, researchers who themselves are part of the profession have not uniformly accepted these directions or the models developed as either uncontested or neutral models of

policy (Deem, 2001). The managerial turn, labelled ‘new managerialism’ (Johnson, 2002: 81; Deem, 2001; Currie and Thiele, 2001), the practices of ever increasing accountability demands or ‘quality assurance’ and the ‘culture of audit’ (Morley, 2002) are not accepted as compatible either with academic working cultures and values (Blackmore and Sachs, 2001: 47; Johnson, 2002: 102) or with agendas for gender equality and access (Blackmore, 2000: 143; Blackmore, 2002). The impact on pedagogy is not uniformly accepted either as competencies may have not much to do with developing critical knowledge aimed at empowering the students to become critical beings (Barnett, 1997). For instance, one practitioner strongly challenges the new, market-oriented model of teaching: ‘the all-prevailing model of the university as a roll-on-roll-off skilling factory and of anybody challenging that model as rather amateur, rather blinkered clingers to a past Golden Age’. (Parker, 2003: 529) He goes on to conclude: ‘I do not know why university teachers never said- ‘that is not what we do’ when all this started. (...) Well, we have certainly reaped the whirlwind and had our vestiges of independent professionalism stripped from us (Parker 2003: 530)’. There is a very strong and ongoing debate among academics about the negative effects of these transformations upon university’s function in society as a producer of general or specialised knowledge and education. The general institutional direction (in otherwise still very varied European systems) is definitely towards ‘managerialism’ ‘marketisation’ or ‘corporatisation’ of the university, all leading to practices of academic capitalism (Roseman, 2010; Boyer, 2010; Olssen and Peters, 2005). Roseman summarises the trends:

These pressures have included an emphasis on: the commercialisation of research, the search for corporate donations and private-public “partnerships” to fund basic university infrastructure as well as specific programs and research projects, the expansion of tiers of insecurely-employed instructors and staff, the search for new ways of competing with other

universities and units for student tuition money, and attempts to promote self-interested individualism and competition among workers (Roseman, 2010: 6)

The new managerial university striving towards the principles of neo-liberal market capitalism in its internal and external functions has been called the 'the schizophrenic university' by Shore who comments on the advanced stages of this process in the case of New Zealand. He has pointed out that paradigm shift in higher education is almost always started by the double threat of massification of student numbers and reduced funding from the state, and a paradoxical demand from the state for more university autonomy, flexibility and innovation coupled with ever increasing 'regimes of measurement and monitoring' (Shore, 2010:15). Several academic and student commentators have argued that the trends of managerialism and marketisation are destroying the fundamental public good and academic functions of European (and UK) universities preparing the university for the task of serving the market (Bague et al., 2010). What is even more interesting, the same trends seem to be operational across historically different university systems in Western and Eastern Europe as well as in other developed and developing countries (Boyer, 2010).

Most importantly it has been argued that the new neo-liberal dominant paradigm of university governance and of academic work is producing newer, flexible but also deeply fragmented, contradictory, performative academic identities (Shore, 2010). Even more importantly, individuals and academic unit leaders themselves have taken an active part in shaping this new form of university by accepting some of the technologies into their work practice or by taking part in the managerial shift in their own work expectations and benefiting from them materially and in terms of the power awarded to them if they become part of the new

managerial elites of the university (Roseman, 2010; Bague et al., 2010). On the other hand, the transformations occurring through such policy shift can also be perceived as creative and genuinely reforming in terms of allowing for the construction of new degree programs and new academic and professional identities (for academics and students) whilst at the same time, complicating the classical dimensions of academic and institutional autonomy (Romano, 2010).

Academics respond to the pressures of reform in many, often contradictory ways and different groups respond differently, making it important to investigate in a qualitative manner ‘how academics perceive, experience and negotiate changes brought by those reforms and the issues that most affect their everyday lives (Shore, 2010). The professional is not seen as only implementer of policy but as an agent of the change process, as the agency heuristic developed by Marginson and Rhoades (2002) would suggest. The effects of global and international dimensions make this study even more interesting, as Deem points out: ‘The local–global axis is an important concept both for those interested in the cross-cultural development of higher education and for those more concerned with researching the organisational characteristics of universities in one country only’ (Deem, 2001: 8).

In this thesis I will focus on linking the global processes with the practitioners undergoing university transformation, in particular through their experiences of internationalisation. The change academics experience may be productive or destructive for themselves as individuals, for their practices, contexts and for the profession. As Dillabough and Acker (2002: 231) put it in relation to teacher educators: ‘a central research issue in the sociology of education has

become the impact of international neo-liberal reforms upon classifications such as “academic work” and “professional identity”. More work on these two concepts in relation to the concrete academic professional in particular contexts rather than whole profession is needed. This brings me to my research questions which can now be placed in the context of global/institutional policy context:

R.Q.1 How is the internationalisation process becoming embedded in academic identities?

R.Q.2. What are the effects of internationalisation on the academic’s understanding of the professional practice, policy change and their position in higher education?

The literature on internationalisation which brings me closer to the theoretical framing of my own study concerns the issues encountered by international teachers (Leask, 2007), the ‘international classroom’ (De Vita, 2007) and the experiences of international students studying in Western educational context and the meaning-making, identity formation or practice that occurs on the meeting point of the international and the local (Dixon, 2006). This literature ranges from normative calls for how an internationalised teacher should teach and what skills they should acquire (Leask, 2007; Sanderson, 2008; Gacel-Avila, 2005; Vincenti, 2001) to research reports on actual practices or experiences in specific contexts, of both teachers or students (Hamza, 2010; Stohl, 2007; Pyvis and Chapman 2005; Demir et al., 2000; Sandgren et al., 1999).

Some of these studies relate to the impact of internationalisation on individuals were of evaluative character and had pointed out learning competencies and career competencies or intercultural competencies that students or staff acquired by studying abroad (as summarised

by De Witt, 2002). These studies often pointed to broad human dimension of learning or 'character building' (De Wit, 2002: 117) of these experiences, and as such were not considered helpful in tracking actual academic learning outcomes of study abroad. (Knight and De Wit, 1995: 13) A recent study of the ERASMUS program's mobility of students and teachers (Janson, Schomburg and Teichler, 2009) is relevant in as much as it establishes that even short term period of study or teaching abroad is reported to have provided a deeply transformative experience for future professional careers, but it also suggests that as mobility becomes more widespread, more significant and long-term experiences of internationalisation become necessary for career advancement. Hoffman (2008) and Tremblay (2005) both study individual academic mobility as a form of immigration. Hoffman establishes the differences between timescales and contexts of academic mobility in order to highlight the complexities and the spectrum of possibilities of international mobility, pointing to the need of further and more theoretically sophisticated and more qualitative research on academic mobility and international migration in the twenty first century. Dixon (2006) examines the intersection between discourses of internationalisation, globalisation and Westernisation among practitioners and students in the framework of a specific Australian-Thai graduate program collaboration, showing how more benevolent readings of internationalisation as public good (with Western pedagogy as its key component) help mask the globalising, profit-oriented and Westernising practices underpinning the practice. Some selected studies, which are theoretically related to my research questions, are going to be further reviewed in the third chapter, which concerns my conceptual-theoretical tools.

In this chapter I have considered the broad policy dimensions of change in higher education using the concepts of globalisation and Europeanisation in the Western university contexts. In the next chapter, I will turn to a far more varied and far less researched regional context of higher education change in Eastern and Central Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Chapter 2. Transformations in Eastern European higher education.

The previous chapter considered key changes in higher education as seen in Western Europe or the industrialised Western world. This chapter's aim is to consider ways of understanding change in higher education in Eastern Europe, which constitutes the large scale policy context of this thesis.

2.1 The general background of transformations in the post-soviet and post-socialist higher education.

As I have begun to argue above, a new understanding of the process and effects of change is generated when we consider different levels of analysis, and particularly when we focus on the local and individual practitioner level. Nevertheless, the national and regional context and how these fit into global developments is a necessary preliminary overview. There are a number of studies or commentaries on the reform of higher education in this region, as seen within the broader European or global trends (Jarab, 2008; Tomusk, 2007; Kwiek, 2007, 2004; Scott, 2002), or looking at specific national systems (for example, Johnson, 2010; Tomusk, 2003b; Kroos, 2007; Glonti and Chitashvili, 2007; Howlett, 2006; Slantcheva, 2007, 2003; Smolentseva, 2003; Kwiek, 2003; Marga 2003, 2002; Nicolescu, 2002; Fogel and Mauch, 1995; Darvas, 1995). These studies often provide a set of somewhat contrasting

evaluations of change centred on the processes of democratisation, modernisation and Europeanisation. What is clear from these analyses is the complexity of multiple transformations in higher education, which have resulted in new universities or even in new higher education systems, whilst partially preserving some of the university-state dynamics characteristic of the post-soviet and post socialist states.

It needs to be pointed out that we are speaking of a whole range of countries under the broad regional classification ‘Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union’, which, it has been argued, consist of educational systems that are not very similar and have been diversifying further. However, even the authors who do not like to generalise about its common characteristics, do continually write about these countries as a coherent post-socialist ‘region’ (e.g. Scott, 2002; Kwiek, 2006; Tomusk, 2000). One similarity among the contemporary Eastern European universities is that they share some basic continental European values summarised by Scott (2009: 283) as being ‘mass in scale and structure but elitist and hierarchical in fundamental values (certainly in contrast to the more open American higher education system)’.

Eastern Europe has certainly been firmly part of the continental tradition in education and represents the ‘chair model’ of a department, characterised by sharp distinction between professors and junior staff and long career progression from the latter to the former (as opposed to the Anglo-Saxon department-college model characterised by a flatter collegial structure (Enders, 2007: 13).

In historical terms, distinct stages of communist rule, of varied length in particular countries, point to an undeniable legacy of communism on the one hand, but also to somewhat different post-communist political cultures (Scott, 2009: 272). According to Scott (2009: 271), the perceived similarities in the post-communist higher education systems were caused by the unifying effect of the communist period, including forced collectivisation of agriculture leading to a kind of 'levelling up' of the more agricultural societies and a kind of 'levelling down' of the more industrialised ones. Additional similarities included partial or near-total destruction of previous intellectual elites together with the preferential treatment of working class and peasant students and the suppression of political differences by the various communist regimes. Tomusk argues that characteristics such as vocationalism, relative separation of research and teaching, highly centralised curriculum, and strong political control over institutions of higher learning (Tomusk 2000b: 52) have been over generalised by their critics after 1989 in a drive to demonise the communist past. However, David-Fox and Peteri (2000: 5) in their history of post-war soviet influence on the higher education systems, clearly identify early features of the communist academic regime at its inception and throughout the twentieth century, and its influence or 'domestication' across the countries of Eastern Europe. The developments included a state promoting science and at the same time suppressing autonomy in academia, the partial separation of research and teaching through the reorganisation of the academies of science and universities, a drive towards centralisation, the interpenetration of political and professional cultures and a preference for vocationalisation of university training, leading to, in the more extreme cases, the separating off of some faculties and their being placed under the influence of specific ministries or state companies (David-Fox and Peteri, 2000: 4-5).

The authors who study the history of socialist or post-soviet educational space see it as historically derived from a very distinct ‘Soviet academic regime’ (David-Fox and Peteri, 2000: 5) or the ‘Russian variant’ of higher education (Howlett 2011), which had developed even before communism and which during communism had exerted certain direct or indirect influence on the countries of the Warsaw Pact (Conelly, 2000), not to mention the former soviet republics (Howlett, 2006).

Even before we consider the varied degrees of soviet legacy in Eastern European higher education systems, we need to point out their more underlying common historical origin. Eastern European higher education systems initially derive from the ‘Humboltian’ or German model of university based on the principle of academic freedom of the professor to research and teach, which is based on a particular accommodation between academic oligarchy (professors) and the state (Howlett, 2011). This generally resulted in a strong ‘elite’ position of the professoriate, very pronounced hierarchy between different participants of the system (students, young researchers and full professors) and a very teacher-centred (and predominantly lecture-based) approach to teaching students. This was somewhat different from the more direct control of higher education system as a national apparatus for the production of state bureaucracy and the direct state control of the professoriate characteristic of the French or ‘Napoleonic model’ (Howlett, 2011) which exerted some influence on the Romanian higher education system. However, the end result of Russia’s adoption of the Germanic model in nineteenth century was an imperial system with an even stronger direct control of higher education by the state bureaucracy based on specific political priorities of

the state (such as, modernisation, urbanisation and repression of political dissent). It is this general model that subsequently became the basis for the soviet version of higher education which exerted influence on the republics and satellite states of the Soviet Union (Howlett, 2011).

Ruegg summarises the formation of the Russian universities in a slightly different way, as an amalgamation of the French and German traditions:

‘They rejected the French college model and adopted the German university model (...) But at the same time, the state assigned these universities, which were dedicated in principle to science, and enjoyed at least theoretical autonomy, the function of training its bureaucracy, as the French *grandes ecoles* did. This antagonism between the two models marked the alternating phases of liberalism on the one hand, and repression and militarisation on the other. (Ruegg 2004, 10)

These continental models were redefined early on during the communist period (in Russia in 20s and 30s and in the other counties in 40s and 50s) by an even greater tendency towards state control and an explicit social engineering purpose imposed upon higher education.

In the countries which became soviet republics and satellite states this has been exacerbated by the controlling and modernising aspirations of communist rule, often mimicking the Soviet Union model in terms of curricula, length of study, names of degrees and career progression, as argued by Connolly (2000), in the period after the Second World War and until Stalin’s death. Even though higher education has also been a considerable haven of resistance or relative autonomy in the ‘thaw’ periods in the respective countries (Scott, 2009: 272), the net effect of the communist rule was to establish a very specific type of higher education system,

even if particular features varied somewhat from country to country (David-Fox and Peteri, 2000).

In the broadest terms, higher education institutions were almost exclusively state owned, linked to the manpower needs of key industries and professions, politically controlled, funded directly by the state through a rigid line-budget, with limited (or no) autonomy or capacity of independent development (Scott, 2009: 276). During the communist period, for the countries directly under Soviet rule, there has been little precedent for complete university autonomy in teaching and little precedent for research - oriented teaching. That is because, as Howlett argues:

the soviet authorities displayed 'anxieties over academic authority, expressed through the proliferation of subject areas; through the weakening of certain disciplines that might critically examine soviet society; to the state's constant concern that academia needed to be watched and managed: could not be trusted to be self-regulating. These weaknesses continue into the post-1991 world, just as the Russian Variant continues to form the basis of higher education throughout the former Soviet Union and into Eastern Europe. (Howlett, 2011: 2)

The ensuing ethos of higher education included a highly prescriptive broad curriculum (prescribed either directly by the state or more indirectly through the perceived immutable tradition or canon of the discipline established by senior professors associated with the most prestigious universities), a long set of mandatory courses understood as 'the fundamental knowledge' often organised as a series of historical or thematic surveys of the discipline, a largely reproductive and prescriptive notion of student learning all the way through the first degree (and often into the first research degree). The resulting programs of study were almost

identical in each university, and there was little staff or student mobility, largely for economic and administrative reasons, but also due to the necessity of securing the necessary patronage of professors for admission or transfer. The mobility was therefore usually vertical only - the best undergraduate students became paid teaching assistants right after their first degree (usually constructed as 4-5 years leading to a small master's thesis), and the most successful of them became junior lecturers, leading to the possibility of writing a first doctorate (candidate of science). The securing of university employment as a lecturer earned through the first doctorate, in turn led to the writing of second doctorate (facilitation or doktorskaya) and therefore securing a senior status at the department (often called 'chair' or 'kafedra').

Summing up, the systems under discussion are a mixture of the Humboltian ideal (where 'knowledge' or even 'fundamental knowledge' certainly takes the centre stage), with some features more akin to the Napoleonic tradition where the professional formation of civil servants, teachers, engineers is paramount (Scott, 2009: 272). In terms of the ideal institutional types discussed by Olsen 2007 (20), the East European universities became predominantly 'instruments for shifting national political agendas' of the state in the twentieth century, whilst retaining some ideological orientation towards the model of 'university as a rule-governed Community of Scholars'.

2.2 The transition and global/regional trends as a defining policy context.

The first stages of change since the collapse of Soviet Union were dictated by the process of economic and political transition and created a particular context for educational change in each country that continues to influence current developments (Kwiek, 2007). Whereas

economic development, linked by policy-makers to the concept of 'knowledge society', might be seen as the cause for change in Western systems (Jongbloed, Maassen and Neave, 1999: 3; Tomusk, 2007: 276) very different circumstances contributed to change in the east of the European continent, even if some of these changes are now seen as converging with the Western European policy trends (Scott, 2009, 2002). In Eastern Europe, the starting point was total economic and political collapse of the regimes, combined with partial or complete restructuring of higher education. This created a context for unprecedented speed of change, often amounting to a total redesign of higher education, some would claim, far more radical than any attempted in the Western societies (Scott, 2009, 2002), yet leaving many gaps and contradictions in its wake, due to which any future educational transformations would potentially differ from those in Western countries (Kwiek, 2007; Tomusk, 2007).

In the broadest understanding, most of the former socialist countries have undergone partial or complete redesign of the political and administrative system, the political party system, and the economic system (Rakowska-Harmstone, 2006). This change has resulted in more or less functional democratic societies (or quasi-democracies) replacing the socialist or communist ones, with capitalism and free market ideology replacing socialist planned economies (Holmes, 1997:11). Perhaps the single most important commonality of these transformations, despite subsequent differences in outcomes, is the depth and comprehensiveness of the change, which meant that the post-socialist countries all attempted:

‘a simultaneous and very rapid transition from centralised and state-run and largely nationalised economy, a highly centralised and relatively closed society, a society largely devoid of a bourgeoisie, and from long-standing military and trading blocks, towards a

marketised and privatised economy and pluralist democracy and a society with a powerful capitalist class and to new military allegiances and trading blocks (Holmes, 1997: 19)

Social changes were equally profound: new political and economic behaviour and new labour relations were created and the collectivist social values of entitlement to work and services were partially replaced by individualistic and consumerist ones (Koralewicz and Ziolkowski, 2006; 193). The transition towards pluralist, democratic society occurred at different speeds across the region, with some countries being considered 'trailblazers', others transforming only partially or haltingly, and still others being either classified as 'late starters' or 'near failures' (Rakowska-Harmstone, 2006: Kofman and Roszkowski, 2006).

The post-communist countries faced the challenge of transition from a similar starting point in terms of educational philosophy and some of the features of the system but with considerable difference of attitudes towards reform and the place of their system in the newly reconstructed (and integrating) Europe (Howlett, 2006). Russia saw itself (and continues to see itself) as a alternative centre of excellence in education, temporarily weakened by economic crisis, and still a model for other countries, whereas some other post-communist countries have firmly decided to reorient themselves towards Western values and towards the possibility of being directly integrated into European Union (e.g. Ukraine or Georgia).

For these countries a significant re-orientation of values has also been proposed as a necessary part of higher education reform: 'Education systems in these countries must transform old, egalitarian and passive working mentalities into active, competition-based and responsibility-taking mentalities, which are basis of market-driven societies (Nicolescu 2002, 91)'. Higher

education laws were changed very fast in the majority of the countries in question, and the system faced significant re-design (Marga, 2002, 2003; Cerych, 1997) usually involving an increase in institutional autonomy (Cermakova et al., 1994; Jastrzab-Mrozicka 1994; Marga, 2002), and creation of the legal conditions for the emergence of private institutions (Nicolescu, 2002; Sadlak, 1994).

Despite subsequent differentiations of outcome in each country, transition itself as a process is something that distinguishes these countries from Western ones and has serious, if still not adequately understood, effects on the higher education systems, as the analysis by Kwiek implies:

Higher Education in the Region, generally and with a few exceptions, is in a state of permanent crisis since the fall of Communism (...) from paralysis of substantial research functions to steady decreasing public funds to the mushrooming of both private and public diploma mills to corruption, to lowering of professional ethos and morale, with the combination of the above depending on the country (Kwiek, 2007: 95).

Most authors refer to the situation that ensued as a double challenge, consisting of both new global trends and ongoing older challenges of transition. The most obvious legacy of transition is a severe and chronic underfunding of universities and research (Kwiek, 2007; Scott, 2002). This does not prepare the sector well for participating in the 'knowledge economy' and makes it nearly impossible for it to enter the globalisation or international competition stage, if we were to accept these as inevitable contemporary policy trends (Scott, 2002, 2009).

The most visible change on the educational landscape, is the appearance of private higher education institutions, in systems that had traditionally been exclusively state-sponsored and controlled. (Kwiek, 2007; Tomusk, 2003a). Not only did the state institutions compete for the first time with new alternative programs, they themselves have developed a for-profit agenda, and programs attracting fee-paying students have mushroomed. Indeed researchers have seen the development of private education as one of the most radical changes in higher education, which is reflected in not only the development of new institutions but also in increasingly entrepreneurial behaviour of state universities (Kwiek, 2007; Scott, 2002: 148). Some researchers welcomed the development of this field as a hallmark of consumer-driven educational provision, and even a site for developing good practice in teaching and research (Slantcheva, 2005), though far more negative evaluations are also visible (Tomusk, 2003a). The ensuing entrepreneurialism in some of the systems has been lauded as a miracle of academic entrepreneurship in some cases (Pawlowski, 2004), a booming of short-term, second-rate educational system (Jablecka, 2007) in others, whilst it can equally be seen as a sign of the rise of 'grey entrepreneurialism' of quasi-legal nature (Howlett, 2010).

Another important and quite unique development was the profoundly political and national aspect of transition, that is, a development of new nation states. Some countries gained independent or sovereign status, in particular the former soviet republics, leading to a profound nationalisation process, where universities became places to rebuild or uphold again the sense of independence (Kroos 2007, Glonti and Chitashvili 2007). In these countries, formerly closed universities were reopened and national languages were used in higher education again. This has meant that, initially at least, the prospect for involvement in supra-

national reforms leading to increased cooperation or even harmonisation of higher education was not unproblematic, even if it has been seen as a way to gain access to important networks and policy ideas. Most countries wanted to establish and guard the new national discourses, utilising higher education as an important institution for such processes (Kroos, 2007), while at the same time the need to access resources through international cooperation pushed the universities in the direction of partial openness, often resulting in deeply divided or contradictory opinions on the need for reform or international cooperation (Tomusk, 2007).

All the countries in Eastern Europe sooner or later changed their laws on higher education to mark the beginning of a new political order in education, and in order to allow the private higher education institutions to gain legal status (Kwiek, 2007; Slantcheva, 2003; Smolentseva, 2003) Debates on decentralisation of university administration and a discussion on university autonomy from the state were the most common feature of the early transition period (Fogel and Mauch, 1995: 228-230), leading to a kind of 'liberal absolutism' of the early reformers in central Eastern Europe (Scott, 2009: 278). Universities gained autonomy from the ministries of education and new accreditation agencies were created to take over some of quality control mechanisms. However, the notion of university autonomy is still difficult to conceive in the countries of the former Soviet Union, and the state continues to be the main source of funding for students as well as the judge of quality and even the content of educational programs, despite the newer regimes of institutional autonomy gaining some ground (Carter, 2007). This aspect of higher education is perhaps the slowest to change, as the values underlying the system are still the ones that involve control over the professional cadre and the educational institutions by the state. On the other hand, those countries where

autonomy has been achieved are not guaranteed to make progress in educational reform, as a type of academic conservative oligarchy emerged (Tomusk, 2003b; Kroos, 2007).

This legacy of transition and its limited reform agenda in education means that processes such as Europeanisation or globalisation are all going to occur under very specific circumstances and may have very different trajectories to similar processes in Western Europe or elsewhere (Kwiek, 2007; Tomusk, 2007; Howlett, 2006). The Europeanisation process added a specific new dimension of transformation in higher education, particularly through these countries' participation in the Bologna process (Haug and Tauch, 2001) for which, arguably, the higher education systems were much less prepared than their Western European counterparts. Some authors claim that any changes that these systems undertook as a result of their participation in the process are likely to remain legalistic or cosmetic changes, or what can be called 'technical compliance' (Kwiek, 2007; Tomusk, 2007; Howlett 2006).

Nevertheless, in structural terms, the state-generated reforms have used the Bologna process as a justification to affect significant changes in the 'architecture' of higher education and most countries have adopted its basic principles such as the introduction of three cycles of higher education, with a new, shorter BA cycle degree and a completely new MA-level qualification added on, and with some progress towards reforming PhD level qualification (Howlett, 2006). Modular organisation of courses has been introduced; credit systems are being adopted. Despite significant debate and the slow pace of reform, the predominant justification of the reformers has been expressed in terms of the discourse of 'catching up with the West' (e.g. Marga, 2003) very much confirming the 'underdevelopment' of the region

thesis which is problematised by Scott (2009: 281). A strong difference became apparent between countries of central Europe which clearly reorganised their systems very dramatically towards reinstating academic freedom in institutions, promoting institutional diversity and reinstating research at universities (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz, 1993), and the countries of former Soviet Union, in which the tendency has been for the state to diminish funding but to maintain strict control over the curriculum and educational standards (Howlett, 2006). According to one recent assessment, the impact of Bologna process is that it has provided a new platform (and an international network of actors) driving towards policy emulation, and towards an increasing (though varying between countries) adoption of market-oriented and managerialist approaches to university governance, particularly in the new EU countries (Dobbins and Knill, 2009). This is strengthened by the emergent policy interest in national systems perceived as more dominant and more successful and supported by a whole range of transnational agents (EU programs, OECD, World Bank). In a word, the new 'global governance' ideology is moving the countries away from the initially adopted Humboltian models of governance, funding and accreditation, towards market-oriented managerialist models:

the market-oriented model dominates discourse on the Bologna platform ... Bologna is increasingly perceived as means of legitimisation of such market-based strategies and (has) hence accelerated their spread at national level (Dobbins and Knill, 2009: 425).

Yet, there have equally been many contradictions and many levels of resistance to profound or fully fledged reform, particularly in the former soviet republics (Tomusk, 2000c). The content of the reform process was largely invented to suit each particular country

administration, generating much confusion about the meaning of the whole process and its impact on the labour market with Russian academic responses being particularly ambivalent or hostile in relation to the new reform agenda (Tomusk, 2007). The resulting new structures are not considered any better than the old ones, and in several countries, the old and new structures coexist in parallel. There is lack of conception of the difference between undergraduate and postgraduate degree, with the MA and BA remaining enigmatic as two separate degrees, and low level of acceptance of BA as a legitimate 'exit degree' into the labour market (Howlett, 2006). Thus the three cycles- based system is still far from reality, with the exception of some countries such as Georgia where it is being implemented more rapidly (Glonti and Chitashvili, 2007). There are also contradictory expectations of what the reform means for the structure of teaching and learning, or for degree programs and curricula (Carter, 2007). For example, even though credits exist formally, the same prescribed amount and sequence of courses is often taken by the students with minimal chances for building individual pathways to the degree (Carter, 2007). The notion of dynamically developed and changing knowledge, as understood by the proponents of knowledge society, is not quickly and widely replacing the traditional canonical and static view of knowledge based on authorities, erudition and fundamentals, often assessed by oral examinations that stress memorisation of content (Carter, 2007: 155-156). Although Western-sponsored and Bologna-inspired curricular and credit/modularisation reforms have been in place for many years, curriculum content still tends towards the broad survey of the discipline, based on breadth of coverage rather than depth of insight, with minimal attention given to undergraduate research and research training (Howlett, 2006).

Finally, it could be argued that the region is increasingly becoming aware of its possible inclusion in the processes of globalisation (Kwiek 2006, 2001a). But due to the particular difficulties faced during transition, the systems in this region are thought to suffer from the effects of globalisation, rather than being part of the globalising industrial societies. This is most strongly stated by Tomusk (2002) who claims that the policy transfer of dominant economic management patterns through aid offered to European Higher Education through loans (particularly those of the World Bank), directly benefit the developed Western societies and the interests of the narrow transnational capitalist class originating from those societies. This argument is developed by critiquing the design and management of loan programs for higher education development project in Eastern European in the 1990s.

This is an area of change where threats are more often mentioned than any likely benefits though the threat is not just globalisation itself but also the countries' lack of preparation for dealing with it (Kwiek, 2001a). Globalisation effects may be considered as unavoidable, if we accept the argument that globalisation as a process itself is also unstoppable. Many of the challenges and opportunities associated with the process of Europeanisation, such as academic brain drain versus the benefits of international student and faculty mobility, can also be understood as a prelude to larger process of economic and cultural globalisation. The question remains whether general economic development of the countries in question will supply enough resources and labour market growth to support the initially expanded higher education sector and to improve its quality. It is also questionable if any of the universities in this region can in any way compete in the newly established global market-place, since their reputations, resources, and research output are still generally tied to the national sphere (apart

from a few exceptional institutions). Considering the low level of state investment in education this seems highly unlikely. However, it is precisely further Europeanisation, and, more broadly, internationalisation that are evoked as both threats and potential answers to the problems of these systems, and are being pursued as such by individual academics and academic leaders (Tomusk 2007). In institutional and policy terms, Kwiek in particular, stresses the role of EU-related internationalisation programs as an important response to threats of globalisation in the region (Kwiek, 2001a: 3). Scott (2009: 279) goes on to say, that this internationalisation in this region 'is very different from the meaning attached to internationalisation in universities in the West, which is already shading into something very different, globalisation'. Internationalisation is often difficult to distinguish in local debates from a discussion of migration to the West or brain drain. Some commentators report a substantial emigration of academics to the West, in some cases consisting of whole research groups (Tomusk, 2007: 235). In general, patterns of academic emigration already noticeable under socialism, in the post socialist-block, have increased substantially, with one study in the 1990s reporting that considerable numbers of science professionals were planning to leave their country for ever, although much higher losses were registered due to internal migration to other sectors of the society (Fiejka, 1996; quoted in Jalowiecki and Gorzelak, 2004). Internationalisation in the Eastern European context also means Westernisation, both in terms of re-orientation towards Western academic values or practices, the increased interest in direct training and continuous professional development undertaken in Western countries in English language and the process of migration to academic institutions seen as centres of research in Western countries. There has been traffic between the perceived periphery of higher education (in the reconstituted European and global professional space) to the perceived centres of

prestige and excellence, rather than a cross-border collaboration of equal partners (institutions or academics). My specific interest in this thesis relates to this aspect of internationalisation, in particular, in the meanings of internationalisation for those academics who return to their home country, rather than emigrate permanently. I explain this research interest in more specific terms in the following section of this chapter and in the subsequent chapter.

Further to that, and with particular relevance for the topic of this thesis, it needs to be noted that internationalisation takes on a new meaning when we consider the rise of interest in social sciences in the contexts where these fields of study had been partly repressed and severely under-resourced during communism, and needed new models and academic input during and after the transition period. Some of the social sciences (economics, sociology, anthropology, social work, international relations, political science being some of the most obvious examples) have had to construct entire degree programs, curricula and teaching resources from scratch or to re-orient them significantly. Despite new institutions and rising student numbers, the universities have been characterised by chronic lack of educational resources in the social sciences (and a similarly chronic lack of modern equipment in the sciences), scarcity of building and office space, lack of computer and electronic resources so important these days for an average academic in the West. This means that internationalisation/Westernisation in many forms (study and professional development abroad, international cooperation with Western universities, seeking funding from Western donors, developing new institutional structures oriented to Western social science) have become a necessity for Eastern European academics in these fields interested in increasing the academic resources of their home institutions.

2.3 The Western influences on the profession: gaps in current research.

In introducing a book on teaching and learning in higher education, Light and Cox summarise the current situation of their intended audience (British academics) as 'living in the eye of a storm' (Light and Cox, 2001: 7). When we consider the changes occurring in various countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union the only description that would match the complexity of the situation for local academics is the impact of a tornado or a tsunami. It is therefore no incident that one of the early studies of transformation in universities of this region appeared in a collection dedicated to change in higher education institutions, entitled 'From the Eye of the Storm' (Jongbloed, Maassen and Neave, 1999).

Many of the changes at the level below the nation state were necessitated by the forced financial withdrawal of the state funding, and the need for universities to survive or even expand in these circumstances (Hossler et al, 1999:61, Stertar and Prohribny, 1999: 169). Many universities had to develop new programs in very difficult financial and human resource situation. At the same time as economic difficulties and inflation decreased universities' funding, student demand for higher education grew rapidly, particularly in the sought after fields supplying the workers and managers for a new capitalist society (Scott, 2002). The student numbers went up and the numbers of universities, as well as programs, grew substantially, but the meaning and consequences of this expansion are different than in the case of the massification of British or Western European universities (Kwiek, 2001a: 27).

While the existing studies and reports try to pinpoint the extent of ongoing transformation on the level of national educational policy and the resulting legal and structural reforms of higher education (De Goof et al., 1998), there is little research into the impact of the new national policies on the level of the university and, even less, on the level of individual university teachers. Those few studies that exist (Westerheijden and Sorensen, 1999; Sabloff 1999; Blazek, 2000) focus on the institutional governance or implementation of policy and not many consider in-depth the implications for academic practices, with the exception of a few studies evaluating specific internationally sponsored projects in some universities (Carter, 2007; Temple, 2006). Moreover, it is often not clear whether change, innovation or continuation of older practices is more often the outcome (Carter, 2007).

Perhaps the best example of such studies are three research articles which appeared in the journal *Higher Education* in 2003, and which all focused on changes in the academic profession in Eastern and Central Europe. Articles by Kwiek, Slantcheva and Smolentseva (2003) discuss changes in academia in Poland, Bulgaria and Russia. All articles provide an overview of the higher education system, discussing educational law reforms and cuts in resources for higher education as well as changes in educational values and academic practices during the period of transition.

The three articles address almost identical issues of expanding higher education, changing laws, emerging private sector, decline in the status of academic profession, state interference and the need for quality control, the ‘inbreeding’ of academia and the lack of new blood and dire need of resources at university. Although the studies aim to discuss changes in the

academic profession they are actually about observable changes in the higher education structure and funding, more than about changes in the work practices or values of the professionals.

There is little adequate research on how individual teachers and their departments or schools have negotiated new educational values and practices. Those researchers that do engage with the study of professional life often provide little empirical data, instead concentrating on the analysis of official policy documents, statistics, or debates in national media. Some of the studies are based on conversations with several academics. The result is that the existing studies may underestimate the diversity of the profession and the possibility of individual adaptation. Similarly, negative experiences of actual individual professionals are nowhere to be found analysed in detail, thus leading to generalisations and lack of knowledge of the variation of experience.

My particular concern is with finding a way to research the impact of international experiences on individual academic professionals as both teachers and potential academic leaders in their institution. The degree to which internationalisation has played a part in transforming the actual professionals or academic decision-makers in higher education institutions is far from clear in the existing studies of reform, particularly in those concerned with the early stages of transition. For example, Cerych points out to the unease of local academic actors in relation to foreign models of education in the Czech context: ‘Certain latent conflict existed, since the change of regime, between the influence and attractiveness of foreign models and advisers, and what might be called, and, in fact, was called a restoration

trend -a return to pre-war models and traditions.’ (Cerych, 2002: 112). Others have pointed out that a certain infatuation with the Western systems was the necessary outcome of years of (more or less complete) isolation on the one hand, and the lack of existing models of education in some fields (e.g. business schools), on the other (Scott, 2009: 278). This has apparently led to a situation when returnees from the West established new universities - but this process of Western emulation has not been studied in-depth.

For instance, Wersterheijden and Sorensen (1999) present an overview of several case studies of universities in transition (focusing on two Polish, one Czech, one Slovak, and two Hungarian universities). They mention, among other forms of change, a process called ‘contagion’ where ‘reformers called upon their experiences in Western universities for ideas of different structures’, yet when discussing concrete university cases, these processes are usually seen as rather accidental and therefore of little explanatory power (Wersterheijden and Sorensen, 1999: 25-26):

At WSE [Warsaw School of Economics], the development of the MBA programme in cooperation with the University of Minnesota, for example, was the result of one professors’ involvement with the Institute of Public Affairs there during the initial transition period. At AEW [Academy of Economics in Wroclaw], as well, it was the serendipitous contact of individuals and Western institutions and other academies in Poland which sparked the creation of the MBA programme and several new courses.

It seems that these processes of ‘serendipitous contact’ and ‘fortuitous circumstance’ represent precisely the key and seemingly missing understanding of change in higher

education, as they point to the individual academic leader as a source of institutional change rather than to the institution as a source of individual change. Even as he dismisses Westernisation of academic decision-making as a temporary fascination during early transition, Scott mentions another aspect of the process: 'Second, more concretely the West provided examples of free institutions, which actually operated, including, of course, universities (Scott, 2009: 279)'. Providing decision makers and individual practitioners with models of working institutions is something that definitely deserves further study as to the meanings generated by such learning, especially as the assessment also implied that the local institutions were not actually working properly, and that the Western universities were much more effective and therefore good models. Alternative explanations of mobility as a source of positive comparison and better self-confidence have also sometimes been made, though without in-depth qualitative data provided (Stastna, 2001).

There have been some studies of early patterns of academic mobility that suggest it has been an important and productive process for the academic profession (Cerych, 1996). It ought to be pointed out that it is difficult to give an indication of the percentage of academics who have been internationalised or on their way to becoming internationalised in this part of the world, as most studies chose to focus on the issue of student mobility and larger cross-border cooperation on the level of the institution, the system or the regional organisations such as the EU (Teichler, 2004; Enders, 2004; Bartel, 2003; Teichler and Jahr, 2001; Van der Wende, 2001; Van Damme, 2001). In general, academics were previously less internationalised and integrated into the global academic market, due to the isolating influence of state socialist or communist regimes, with only some degree of openness available in specific countries and

periods of time. The low level of international exposure of Russian academics in comparison to colleagues from other, Western nations was clearly shown by the research on the topic carried out by the Carnegie Foundation (Welch, 1997). The phenomenon is likely to have increased with the process of transition and Europeanisation.

My main approach therefore is to interview the academics with the experience of internationalisation and to carry out an analysis of their own transformations in order to get to a better understanding of the contradictions or re-inventions of academic practice that these experiences produce. We may be dealing primarily with Westernisation of educational thinking (e.g. Kwiek, 2001b). Of course, at the same time, there may be attitudes that preserve older educational practices and values. This pattern of accommodation to newer, Western values and resistance based on older codes of behaviour has already been noticed in relation to schooling practices in Russia (Elliott and Tudge, 2007).

Furthermore, it has to be stated that in this study I am not abandoning the idea of institutional and structural contexts that may structure the actions and experiences of the academic professionals. The internationalised academics are hardly free agents acting outside of the structural conditions they find themselves in.

But the structural contexts of internationalisation are not only, or maybe not primarily, the national higher education system itself or the specific institutional context. They are often international organisations and NGO's, foreign governments or supra national structures such as the EU. The influence of new values may have occurred particularly through the

opportunities offered by such organisations, which have acted outside of or parallel to any formal pressures on the national higher education systems. Importantly for my own research, my own institutional network has been acknowledged as one of the key actors in this area contributing to the training of individuals and to ‘know-how’ transfer for a number of years (Flather, 1994). This institutional context has also been understood as an example of soft policy transfer through supra-national, meta-NGO networks (Stone, 2008). Stone explains this policy transfer alternative as:

‘The involvement of non-state actors, and specifically transnational philanthropy, in certain fields of policy making and policy delivery can promote the ‘transnationalization of policy. The spread of policy and practice does not always occur in a simple bilateral exchange between sovereign states but can be complemented or by-passed by transnational policy networks (Stone, 2009: 4)’.

As a consequence of the existence of several alternative institutional actors offering opportunities for individual and institutional international cooperation or learning, internationalisation may have become a significant way of overcoming underfunding or lack of professional development opportunities by individuals in the profession. In this way, it seems to have affected reform in Central and Eastern European universities by helping spread policy and practice ideas in higher education (Bremer, 1997), though serious qualitative or quantitative data on this is not available. The existence of several overlapping international actors, programs and transnational policy networks is another part of the policy context of my study.

My particular interest is in the impact of these internationalising forces on the academic community, who act as local policy implementers below and parallel to national policy making, as the research questions of my study suggest:

R.Q. 1. How is the internationalisation process becoming embedded in academic identities?

R.Q.2. What are the effects of internationalisation on the academic's understanding of the professional practice, policy change and their position in higher education?

In other words, the first of my research questions concerns the issue of how the local and global aspects of identity co-exist in the self-constructions of the academic professional identity. The second research question could also be paraphrased as: what are the academic practices and reform orientations associated with the experiences of internationalisation? My study will focus on the formation of academic identity and practice, and the approach to reform of academic professionals who, having experienced some foreign educational system, are re-integrated into their own local context, in which their subsequent teaching, research and other elements of academic work take place.

Having established this general research orientation, the concepts of internationalisation, the academic professional, and the notion of individual and academic identity (and its transformations) need to be discussed further. This entails another literature review, more theoretical or conceptual than policy-focused, which will allow me to orient myself in the sphere of research most directly related to the study of professional and academic identity and to the theorisation of the professional individual that this requires. This will provide the study with a sociological rather than policy analysis lens on the phenomena discussed in this

chapter. The theoretical justification of this approach and the research questions themselves will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3. The theoretical and conceptual approach of the study.

3.1 Internationalisation and the focus on individual academics in transforming contexts.

In the previous chapter, I have argued that there is a gap in research on the processes of change in higher education, particularly in relation to the transformation of post-socialist and post-soviet higher education. Very few studies of change focus on the intersection of wider societal or educational processes and changes in academic identities and practices. In developing the general research interest of my study, in this chapter, I focus on the significance of internationalisation in creating alternative academic identities in the region of post-socialist Europe. Following that, I focus on conceptualising my research project using social theory concerned with the transformation of identity.

The focus on individuals from various post-socialist countries, and from various institutions undergoing transformation is intended to address the existing gap in research. I did not intend to create another study of a particular national system of higher education, as most of the existing policy-related research aims to do that, and I was able to use many of its general findings. Nor did I want to study the results of one particular program or intervention - the most common strategy in internationalisation studies which are largely descriptive or evaluative of national/European policy. My focus is rather on experiences of internationalization among social science faculty belonging to the post-89 cohort, mainly young academics just entering their profession or recently established as lecturers, who

undertook their professional training in the period of transition, and did this partly through international mobility. The potential similarities of the impact of internationalization and the individual differences of adapting these to one's own identity and using them in the process of professional academic development are both necessary for understanding internationalization and also informative about larger processes of social change at universities. It is not of course possible to generalise from these studies to the specific system, institution or context. Moreover, the institutional context of this study is transnational or international as well, it is centred on the network of Open Society Foundations (OSF) network in which all the interviewees have been participants in various ways. This context will be introduced further in the following chapter.

The existing research on the process of internationalization of academics, and its omission of the individual practitioner's perspective, needs further brief discussion. Perhaps because of significant methodological bias in educational research towards (national) systems (Robertson and Dale, 2007), and a secondary bias towards institutions as agents of change, the meanings of internationalisation at the individual level remain completely understudied and often undervalued. More importantly, questions of the individual agency of academics as potential change agents in the transformation of Eastern European higher education systems, institutions or academic practices, are also not adequately researched. In other words, the bias towards educational structures in this area of research is so great that the meanings of individual adaptations to change are not adequately studied. For example, in a volume on higher education as a changing institution, Maassen, Neave and Jongbloed (1999) refer to

(institutional) culture as an *object* of change, which is as a kind of material upon which a reform process at institutional level is performed.

This understanding of culture as object also extends to the ways in which professional identities are understood. This is clear from the definition of reform as ‘institutional efforts to adapt the culture of (part of) the institution, or to change the (collective or individual) academic culture of the institutional academic staff’ (Maassen, Neave and Jongbloed, 1999: 5-6). The assumption here is that the institution itself is the ‘agent’ of change and individual or collective faculty their passive recipients. This may of course be the case, but it is also possible that the agency of academics as individuals and groups might change the institution’s culture or produce alternative educational structures.

Internationalisation may highlight this aspect of change well: it could be the individuals that bring in new culture, or practices, and therefore change their institutions. There is obviously a dialectical relationship: individuals only have limited scope of action by virtue of their specific institutional and collegial network and their positioning or their career stage, yet their institutional positioning is also partly the outcome of their individual agency, for example of the choices they made in their academic training that may not be explained by the institutionally driven processes only. The international experiences of Eastern European and post-soviet faculty during the transition process may have been the result of such a choice, though they may have since entered more developed institutional strategies as well.

For this process to become visible the focus of research needs to be the practitioner and not the institution or the national higher education system. What is studied in this approach, are individual experiences as part of a professional life course, namely the development of research and teaching and various steps in a career progression. These experiences may partially arise out of systemic changes (and will be circumscribed by systemic limits to individual agency) but they are also an outcome of a more or less individually driven decision-making process. They do not allow for structural explanations or generalisations across a whole profession or even as characteristics of any institutional strategy (though increasingly internationalisation is of course institutionally driven). They are definitely meaningful parts of a professional life cycle and of the ensuing narrative of professional identity. But even if these processes are not central to the system perspective and do not concern the whole cohort of academics who came into the professional academic life since 1989, that does not mean that they are not significant in understanding change. It is possible that through such processes individual academics become ‘informed participants’ in the process of international policy borrowing, a conduit for new ideas and practices, and critical evaluators of ongoing institutional or national transformations in which they participate.

Although the internationalisation of academics is an under-researched area, there are some quantitative analyses of the phenomenon which do allow for the formation of a research approach of my study. The analysis following “The Carnegie Survey of the Academic Profession” summarised by Welch (1997) is one such source that offers operational definitions of different levels of internationalisation. Three key indicators of internationalisation are offered by him: ‘proportions of staff who had their highest degree

from another country; the extent of their international connections; the perceptions of the importance of such links' (Welch, 1997: 327). This suggests that internationalization is a matter of studying abroad for a doctoral degree and it also denotes the ongoing practice of travelling abroad in order to maintain international academic contacts. The evaluative addition of 'perceptions of importance' of international connections seems of a slightly different nature as it suggests a focus on the ways in which internationalisation is taken on board by the individual as integral to them (whether that means their identity, their practice, or their institutional positioning).

In this study, I have extended the first two, "qualifying" aspects of internationalization. I understand the experience of internationalisation of academic staff as including anything from:

- 1) a part or whole of one degree, or entire higher education training, undertaken abroad
- 2) participation in international professional development programs which include systematic meetings with colleagues from other countries or visits to foreign universities
- 3) a period of research or teaching undertaken in another university abroad.

Possible avenues for understanding *effects* of internationalisation of academics are also outlined by Welch. They include: refreshing the staff of the department with new talent, broadening of perspectives on teaching, learning and scholarship, the incorporation of specific cultural and scientific skills not generally available in the host context, the building of tolerance and understanding among staff and students (Welch, 1997: 324). Obviously, these aspects include both effects on individuals and their departments and therefore these will need

further explication in my own research context. From my point of view such effects are of interest as part of individual's positioning in their own system, or as part of their professional identity construction.

These insights from quantitative surveys carried out across 12 countries (including Russia as the only European and post-socialist system) suggest that internationalised staff are likely to achieve senior, management or powerful positions in their own systems although no clear causal relationship between internalisation and promotion could be established - it is very likely that research-oriented and tenured academics do form an elite regardless of being internationalised. More generally, Welch suggests that internationalisation confers or reinforces certain advantages, posing some interesting and relevant questions as: 'does possessing a foreign degree indicate a substantial interest in international activities, which issues in continuing professional activities? Are staff with a foreign degree more aware of international research? Or do those with foreign degrees perhaps represent a social stratum with more "cultural capital"? (Welch, 1997: 333)'

This study, focused as it was on internationalisation of individual academics (though in a quantitative, survey-driven way), suggests some important issues to consider for a more qualitative approach. The most important themes to consider include the relationship between the individual and their workplace, the approach to teaching, research and other aspects of academic work that the individual develops, their emerging evaluations of the profession, institution and higher education system, and the potentially gendered aspects of

internationalisation. These aspects of the experience of internationalisation were used to guide my inquiry.

In my study, I look for specific aspects of the experiences of internationalisation: skills or orientations gained by the individual that are perceived not to be available locally; ways in which these specific new perspectives are incorporated into the person's sense of academic or professional identity. I will also be looking to find out how academics are using their new skills or new identity for progression in the career or in the workplace, and for the development of their academic practices, and to what extent their international experiences allow them to participate in and evaluate changes or reform agendas of educational systems.

3.2 Available conceptual and theoretical approaches in research on professional and academic identity.

In this section, the notion of professional identity or academic identity will be discussed in relation to existing frameworks and research approaches that can facilitate further development of this research project's own theoretical and conceptual perspective. The insights and theoretical approaches outlined below allow me to choose a perspective of a critical, qualitative and narrative-based research on new professional identities as seen emerging from my own regional context. In the overview of available research I outline the main sources of such a perspective.

My study aims to explore, through qualitative means, the ‘complex dynamics and contesting pressures under which professional as an identity is experienced, enacted, and validated (Dent and Whitehead, 2001: 2)’. That means, I will understand professional identity as an ongoing narrative construction that also translates into meaningful understanding of self and one’s practice in relation to the professional and institutional contexts. My approach will be to focus on the discursive construction of academic identities.

But before I outline my theoretical perspective, the concept of professional identity or academic identity of university teachers itself needs further specification. Most of the research available in this area discusses academic identities and practices in the Western European, British and American contexts. However, the majority of this work (as discussed in the previous chapter) deals less with qualitative studies of the concept of professional identity or even professional practice and more with system-wide or institutional level issues of financing, reform, management of the higher education sector. These studies have provided comparative or system-specific data on the transformations of academic work and academic workplaces in the process of transformation (Shattock, 2001; Honan and Tefferra, 2001; Chevallier, 2001; Askling, 2001; Moscati, 2001; Enders 2001).

One of the well known studies explicitly dealing with Western academic identities in a more qualitative manner is that of Trowler and Becher (2001) which takes an anthropological approach to analysing different disciplines and their academics, classifying them as various ‘academic tribes and territories’, and thus stressing not only the common experiences and practices that unite the profession (teaching, research, peer review, supervision of students)

but also differences within it, especially among pure and applied fields, collaborative and individually driven research fields. The study takes an interpretive, culture-based and qualitative approach, very unlike the majority of policy driven commentaries, and it is particularly important in pointing out the strong component of discipline or academic networks in the construction of academic identity, often perceived as stronger than the influence of a particular institutional setting, and shaping, at least in part, the institutional practices of majority of academics.

Much relevant work adopting more qualitative or post-positivist stance towards the issue of professional identity has been carried out in relation to further education teachers or managers (Whitehead, 2001; Alexiadou, 2001; Shain and Gleeson, 1999). Many of the available qualitative studies on professional identity of educators come from the work on teachers, particularly in the UK context (e.g. Nias, 1989).

One study of academic identity in the context of change is a quantitative comparative analysis of attitudes governing the work practices of German and British Academics (in the field of education) carried out by Pritchard (2005). 'To what extent,' Pritchard asks, 'do academics share the same attitudes and values? How far have market values and orientations become embedded in the professional culture and been embraced by them personally?' (Prichard, 2005: 4) She studied these questions on the basis of a statistical analysis of questionnaires, exploring numerous issues: the relationships between teaching and research; academics support for the rise of executive power or quality assurance mechanisms; their levels of stress,

workload and social status. What emerges is a comparative study of the profession coming from two historically different contexts.

Another study by Mary Henkel (2005) explores academic work and is concerned with the ‘implications of policy change in the UK academic identities’ (Henkel, 2005: 155). Henkel adopts a ‘community’ perspective on academic identity, informed by phenomenology. The study is concerned with deeply held beliefs expressed by individuals and often embedded in group identities, but where these identities are seen as relatively stable. However, this approach to academic identity as part of a specific community and its culture does not shed enough light on the process through which the academic identities are individually constructed rather than absorbed from participation in a group. Similarly, processes that make possible for the individual to participate in a local and global context (such as all the processes subsumed under the notion of internationalisation) cannot be captured either. To my mind, especially in relation to the underdeveloped, reforming systems of higher education in Eastern Europe, the communitarian perspective of stable identities is not adequate to capture the changing and chaotic nature of the processes of academic identity construction among many faculty members.

I understand professional identity in general to be a discursive ongoing project of self-formation, fraught with contradictions but also productive for the individual. It is performed or constructed internally as a coherent story of the self as well as being reworked intersubjectively in the different contexts the academic enters. The work of Clegg (2006, 2008) develops such a theoretical approach. Professional identities are seen as indeed contradictory,

fluid and discursive but the lecturers interviewed by Clegg do nonetheless form meaningful and relatively productive stories of self. Academic identity is understood as ‘the lived complexity of a person’s project and their ways of being in those sites which are constituted as being part of the academic (Clegg, 2008: 329)’ In conceptualising this approach, she follows Margaret Archer’s definition of human agency, based on the ‘internal dialogue’, a coherent narrative emerging out of the personal practices we engage in over long periods of time (Archer, 2000). It is important to note that the ‘sites’ in Clegg’s understanding are not necessarily the local physical spaces but equally the global spaces of various academic networks and exchanges and that academic identity is only part of a set of complex and shifting aspects of various personal identity projects. The resulting identities are defined as hybrid, reflexive, and at the same time secure and authentic in negotiating the contested spaces and discourses of contemporary academia.

There is much literature to suggest that certain policy and socio-economic transformations have the power to seriously undermine any remaining academic autonomy. This includes the studies of changes in the funding of higher education, globalisation, or the spread of distance-education (e.g. Marginson, 2000). However, researchers have generally shown, that academics continue to actively interpret and rework their contexts as best as they can through choices they make in their career, various coping mechanisms and resistance mechanisms (Clegg, 2008; Archer, 2008; Beck and Young 2005, Spall and Norum, 2005; Tierney, 2003; Wells, 2005). The recent work of Louise Archer on the construction of neo-liberal academic identities in the UK (2008) is of particular relevance here. Focused on a qualitative and discourse-based investigation of the younger generation of academics, the study investigated

how new professional identities (here understood as discursive positions rather than authentic selves) are constructed out of the circumstances of a more competitive, massified and audited university system transforming the younger academics into neo-liberal, flexible, knowledge workers. However, she also investigates academics' capacity for reflexivity in the face of the dominant discourses of the university and their various strategies of resistance, challenge or disengagement in order to protect themselves and maintain some personal space.

It should also be pointed out that much of the relevant discussion on academic identity generated recently comes from the new field of professional development (e.g. Trigwell, Prosser and Waterhouse, 1999; Akerlind, 2005). This field is predominantly focused on the development of academic identities in relation to teaching practices and approaches, and some authors argue that the discussion on teaching and its professionalisation offers insights into the changing nature of academic identity impacted by institutional and disciplinary pressures (Fanghanel, 2007), and many stress the reflexive character of such identity construction (Davidson, 2004). Indeed, some of the practitioners of academic development argue that the role of this domain is to help develop new, integrated academic identities in the context of change and partial disintegration of older models of practice (Rowland, 2002). Some researchers of such processes point out to the contradiction between such well intentioned pushes for reintegration and development of academics and contextual and institutional factors that make such a reintegration difficult (Fanghanel, 2007). Others claim that this focus on teaching development should be matched by an equal focus on the research identities of academics that form a major part of their professional self, concerned as they are with the

standing of their research in the discipline as well as the development of their teaching (Akerlind, 2005).

Available sociologically-oriented research that does take up the issue of the socialisation process of academics, points to the complex, uncertain, and often difficult process of such identity construction among some of the faculty, for example junior or part-time academics (Jawitz, 2007; Abbas and McLean, 2001). In an analysis of newer identities of social science academics, Abbas and McLean assert that current literature on academic work is 'comparatively small and patchy' (Abbas and McLean, 2001: 341). These authors point to detrimental changes in the professional contexts at universities and to policies that make professional identity construction full of contradictions. Studying the professional identity of part-time university teachers, Abbas and McLean also point out the importance of the focus on working identities as situated in the concrete contexts of precarious academic work; the focus is on new, and powerless identities of part-time teachers having less agentive power to influence the practices of their institution or even to form their own coherent academic identity.

A lot of the relevant work that engages critically with the notion of academic identity and the contradictions caused by changes in the profession comes from literature focused on gender, particularly from studies of academic women as managers, teachers or researchers (Dillabough, and Acker 2002; Dillabough, 1999; Skelton, 2005) and the difficulties they experience in their role as women academics in transforming workplaces, whether in academia or other educational contexts. Dillabough (1999) presents teachers as 'bounded

individuals who possess some degree of political agency' and her view of identity is inter-subjective, reflexive and discursive, expressed through a dialogue where 'multiple selves meet within a dialectic frame' (Dillabough, 1999: 388, 389). In this view of professional identity, the research process would become the occasion for voicing or producing both the internal and the inter-subjective narratives or constructions of self and 'this implies identifying, for example, the psychological, political, and sociological forces which influence one's capacity to be a "reflective agent"' (Dillabough, 1999: 390).

There is no enquiry, theorised in similar terms, on how individual academics from Eastern Europe construct their identity and practice. However, there does exist an autobiographical collection of life narratives of various generations of sociologists representing several countries of the region entitled 'Autobiographies of Transformation: Lives in Central and Eastern Europe' (Keen and Mucha, 2006). This collection is based on individual biographical essays constructed as a form of 'sociological witness' statement on the experience of communism, transition and new post-communist societies and the development of sociology within these historically important changes. This study seems much closer to the biographical approach that I wish to pursue in generating data for my own research (which will be described in the next chapter), yet its focus is far wider than my research theme, as the aim is to comment on large-scale societal change witnessed by professionals of various generations, and on the transition moment itself.

3.3 Insights from social theory: the concept of self in transforming societies.

At this point, the concept of *identity* itself, which underlies any discussion of professional or academic identity, needs further elaboration. It may well be that the transformations of academic identities in Eastern Europe in the context of internationalisation are also a part of overall change in the place of individuals in society and in the types of identity building that individuals undertake in the transforming social contexts. In this section, such a theoretical perspective on *narrative and reflexive construction of identity* will be outlined

3.3.1 The changing position of individuals in society.

Identity is becoming a key concept in understanding the contemporary social processes. For some sociologists, this necessitates a change of research and theorisation focus, away from a sociology based predominantly on structure. As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2001: xii) suggest: ‘the individual is becoming the basic unit of social reproduction for the first time in history’. Bauman likewise notes that there has been a proliferation of research and theorisation on identity, related to the overall changes in the construction of the self (individual and collective) in the current Western, capitalist, globalising context (2001: 140). The new context of identity work is variously called post-industrial society (Bell, 1974), late modernity (Giddens, 1991), second modernity (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2001), network society (Castells, 2000), risk society (Beck, 1992), post-traditional society (Giddens, 1995), or as a process of reflexive modernisation (Beck, 1995). The contemporary Western society that these authors refer to, is increasingly based on information and communication technologies, networks of power and economic transactions criss-crossing the global space, on mobile individuals and their new engagements with others in new spaces, and on a new connection

between the local and the global: ‘transformations in self-identity and globalisation ... are the two poles of the dialectic of the local and the global in conditions of high modernity. Changes in intimate aspects of personal life, in other words, are directly tied to the establishment of social connections of very wide scope (Giddens, 1991: 32)’. These changes are linked to the appearance of new economic, financial and political power structures, allowing for a new understanding of a ‘deteritorialised’ space, in which different power relations and exchanges of ideas occur. This is sometimes referred to as a ‘space of flows’ in the conceptualisation of Castells (2000: 442). At the same time, Castells points out that: ‘people’s life and experience is rooted in places, in their culture, in their history’ (Castells, 2000: 446).

Some theorists see these new social processes as resulting in a ‘globalisation of identity’ or a kind of ‘identity mobility’, a possibility for individuals in Western societies to form new identities in novel ways and in relation to spaces alternative to the local context of their life: ‘in very few instances does the phenomenal world any longer correspond to the habitual settings through which an individual physically moves. Localities are thoroughly penetrated by distanced influences’ (Giddens, 1991: 188). Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2001: 25) make pretty much the same point: ‘In the global age, one’s own life is no longer sedentary or tied to a particular place. It is a travelling life, both literally and metaphorically, a nomadic life, a life spent in cars, aeroplanes and trains, on the telephone or the internet, supported by mass-media, a transnational life stretching across frontiers’.

It is important to note that the changes outlined by these authors are occurring not only in industrialised Western societies but equally, though in slightly different ways, in Eastern

Europe (Beck, 1995), and they are understood as spreading to the rest of the world and to some non-elite social locations within the industrialised societies. The individual is a contested and unstable entity but also the necessary and productive focus in these theorisations of social transformation:

In the most public and the most private ways we are helplessly becoming high-wire dancers in the circus tent. And many of us fall. Not only in the West, but in the countries that have abruptly opened their doors to Western ways of life. People in the former GDR, In Poland, Russia or China are caught into dramatic 'plunge into modernity'. (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002: 2)

Though the theorists of identity mentioned here usually refer to life-style choices, consumer identities, marital and gender identities (and also collective identities) we may suspect that educational identities as such and internationalised academic identities in particular are also a product of these changes. Nor should research on professional or academic identities continue to treat such identities in terms of products of the stable social structure, stable nation state or educational system. This means that focusing continually on the level of the national system or the educational institution and not on the level of the practitioner's own construction of the educational sphere risks missing an important perspective on change. The above theorisation of identity undoubtedly fits very well the study of internationalisation of academic identities as part of the creation of newer type of identity built by participation not in one but in several academic spaces.

Importantly, the post-industrial reality is thought to coexist with other forms of social change rather than replace them altogether (Beck, 1995: 4-5), resulting in a society 'characterised by hybrid forms, contradictions, ambivalences (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2001: 7). This is very important for considering the still ongoing processes of modernisation or (re)nationalisation in transitional countries as it points out to the possibility of newer but also *hybrid* and *problematic* identities being constructed.

Underlying this perspective is an assertion that the traditional structural identifications of the individual's position in society are no longer the only aspects of identity construction that the individual engages with. The main changes stem from the appearance of post-traditional society (Giddens, 1995) characterised by 'hollowing out' of traditional categories such as gender or family. The strongest categorization of this issue is presented by Beck and Beck-Gernsheim's 'zombie categories' (2001: 27) seen as categories that 'have died but live on', they are culturally dissolved or transformed to the extent that they have lost their pre-industrial connotations. For me, what this particularly suggests is that we are increasingly studying complexity and individual differences that go beyond the meanings previously provided by more or less stable or uniform social categories such as gender, class, ethnicity, location even if these categories do still play a part in shaping social identities.

There are two broad evaluations of the significance of this new social construction of identity. One sees a potentially emancipatory program based on the increasing agency of the individual. This type of theorisation is offered by those authors who point out the dependence of social structure itself on individual creation or active engagement, a kind of 'reflexive

modernisation'. This is well summed up by Lash (1995: 111): 'Reflexive modernisation is a theory of the ever-increasing power of social actors, or 'agency' in regard to structure (...) the theory of reflexive modernisation is a very "strong programme" of individualisation'.

For some other theorists within this field, however, the relative strength of individual agency, or the extent of the deconstruction of the traditional categories, is highly debatable. For Castells, these new dynamics of identity construction occur primarily on the level of newer collective, rather than individual, identities, and are a kind of defence reaction produced either as an outcome of, or in resistance to, globalisation and 'de-traditionalisation' of society:

Identity is becoming the main, and sometimes the only source of meaning in an historical period characterised by widespread destructuring of organisations, delegitimisation of institutions, fading away of major social movements, and ephemeral cultural expressions. (Castells, 1997: 3)

For some authors, individualisation does not mean less social control, and definitely not less social structure as such, but rather a rise of newer, institutional structures (Beck and Beck Gernsheim, 2001: 2). According to them, individualisation does not automatically amount to a celebration of individualism or opening up of space for 'subjectivity', 'freedom' or 'choice'. There is still a network of social institutions and their regulations that constrains individuals, but this time, the control is exercised by the individuals themselves who 'must, in part, supply them [i.e. the regulations] for themselves, import them into their own biographies through their own actions' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002: 2). Instead of clearly marked out biographies predetermined to some extent by geographical and social location, class, gender, people are rather *condemned* to individualisation (Beck and Beck Gernsheim, 2001) which

involves ongoing consideration or negotiation of options (Giddens, 1991) and may result in an ongoing identity crisis (Bauman, 2001) or identity struggle (Beck and Beck Gernsheim, 2001).

To my mind, the positive and sceptical theorisations of the individualised individual do not cancel each other out, but present two sides of the same process, consisting of some new opportunities and some new costs or limitations of identity construction. Whether one or the other aspect is more prevalent is subject to empirical research in specific contexts. The second, more negative theorisation of the individualisation of identity certainly fits better the stance of much current research into the production of neo-liberal identities in education.

The important issue is that this process of individualisation does, however, result in proliferation of possible biographies:

The normal biography becomes the ‘elective biography’, the ‘reflective biography, the ‘do-it-yourself-biography’. This does not necessarily happen by choice, neither does it necessarily succeed. The do-it-yourself biography is always a ‘risk biography’, indeed a ‘tightrope biography’, a state of permanent (partly overt-partly concealed) endangerment. (Beck, Beck-Gernsheim, 2002: 3)

In relation to higher education, this process would connect well to the work of Marginson (2000), who does not at all consider the increased connection between the micro and the macro level of higher education to be a sharp rise in academic’s individual agency. The conditions which force a new type of relationship between the individual and various global processes are not conditions of the individual’s own making, they are changes in the material

and ideological structures of power and its flows. Individuals need to insert themselves into this 'space of flows', or react to it through some form of individual or collective resistance or acceptance of the new rules. However, having been inserted into these new social dynamics, there is a new type of identity work to be done by the individuals in relation to both the local and the global level, and there are many more possible end products of this work, meaning that there is indeed a proliferation of identity work in general, and proliferation of hybrid or multiple identities.

It is important to note here that researchers of education have already engaged with the concept of individualisation in relation to education, for example in studying the emerging life narratives of university students in various countries (Brannen and Nilsen, 2005), and in relation to women academics of two generations (Skelton, 2005). By testing the empirical applicability of the notion, these researchers caution that the concept should not be equated with the rise of autonomous decision making of all individuals in all locations. In most cases, individuals are still strongly shaped by contextual, institutional and broader social structure pressures to conform, at least partially, to the dominant or acceptable choices in the formation of identity and biography.

3.3.2 The reflexive construction of individual identity.

Whatever the real scope for autonomy or agency, most authors seem to agree that the production of identity is now by necessity, a reflexive, narrative or discursive process (Giddens, 1991; Beck and Beck Gernsheim, 2001). Giddens stresses 'the reflexive project of

the self, which consists in the sustaining of coherent, yet continuously revised, biographical narratives (Giddens, 1991: 5)', and similarly Beck and Beck Gernsheim (2001: 4) claim that 'a life of one's own is a reflexive project, and one where life is constructed around several overlapping identities'.

Educational experience in general, and social scientific knowledge in particular (and any other specialised knowledge), play a crucial role in the process of individualisation and feed into it, providing additional resources for the self-reflexive identity construction (Giddens, 1991). Individuals have to use social scientific knowledge as expertise in designing their own lives in such a way that they can continue to shape and understand their own identity and biography in the changing conditions of the labour market and the state policy.

For a successful study on the changing profession in a changing context, the understanding of academic identities as part of the overall construction of the 'self' is a valuable approach. When studying the professional identity of educators, one is primarily studying the identity of individuals who shape their own self, their position in the profession or a set of practices and professional values. They may have the potential for choice and reflexive construction of their biography, perhaps even more than other individuals in society, and they may be more readily engaging in identity reconstruction.

Such a perspective has to some degree been present in other research into professional identity in education. For example, while documenting the professional identity of primary

teachers, Jennifer Nias (1989) stresses this particular aspect of identity formation, as part of the professional identity of teachers as a group, a paradox that is worth discussing further:

As they talked about teachers, pupils, teaching they revealed a paradox: what they had in common was their individuality or, to put it another way, their persistent self-referentialism which made it possible to construct a generalised picture of their experience. Aspects of the ‘self’ repeatedly emerged as central to the experience of these teachers, even though each ‘self’ was different (Nias, 1989: 5)

Academics may provide an even more specific engagement with identity construction, since they may be prone to even more pronounced self-reflexivity in negotiating the increasingly complex and often contradictory expectations and balancing these with other aspects of identity work, as it is shown very clearly in the research by Clegg (2008).

The notion of individualisation seems very much related to the question of the production of new, internationalised academic identities as de-territorialisation and mobility imply more unique personal pathways of identity construction, since more options for that identity construction and more locations and relationships have become possible. This is particularly new and potentially important trend in Eastern European Higher Education after 1989. Academics engaged in the process of internationalisation and coming from an experience of transition should be a particularly good example of an ‘individualised individual’ (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002) as they are often part of the new intellectual elite able to witness and perhaps influence the changing institutions and societies. Indeed, the autobiographical essays

of East and Central European sociologists (Ken and Mucha, 2006) as ‘historical witnesses’, mentioned previously in this chapter, suggest that this is the case as the reflexive or theoretical resources of academics, in particular social scientists, are a readily available resource for such a narrative construction.

However, as Eastern Europeans, they are situated in the context of industrial, transitional societies, thus, like the older women in Skelton (2005) study they may also display a more traditional story of the construction of identity, that is a story seen very much as a continuation of the influence of the categories of gender, ethnicity, social class, locality. It is therefore important to point out that just like gender or class in Western societies, the Eastern European higher education’s equivalent of Beck’s ‘zombie categories’ are equally plausibly, alive and well. As faculty, they may still partly be shaped by institutional and disciplinary culture and the location of their university in higher education system with dominant understanding of faculty roles and obligations as research on their Western colleagues would suggest (e.g. Fanghanel 2007, Spall and Norum 2002; Akerlind 2005; Kogan, 2000; Bensimon, 1994). In the post-communist academic world, these traditional academic structures support a career that is based on predominantly vertical mobility, often based on a strong patronage system between different generations of academics and career progression within the same institution from the undergraduate to post-doctoral levels, among localised and nationalised research and publication venues with minimal international exposure and peer review. The systems are still predominantly characterized by highly authoritarian management and planning at a distance of academic work (whether by the academic oligarchs or bureaucrats). Conceptions of knowledge, research, teaching, career progression,

management may be changing only partially and always in relation to still existing conceptions of the profession.

Nevertheless, it seems to me that the process of internationalisation of academics will to some degree (whether successfully or not) contribute to a new, and possibly a more individualized or more reflexive account of academic identity. It is possible to assume that internationalised academics will be a group displaying particularly well both the processes of globalisation of identity and proliferation of different biographies. Namely, in the context of the multiple forms of internationalisation (linked to transition, Europeanisation, globalisation) various identity narratives can also be expected.

The conception of academic identity as an individual construction in specific (constraining and changing) circumstances of social transformation will underlie my research. Academic identity will be understood as a discursive or narrative project bound up with the balancing of other projects of the self, and responsive to changing material conditions and policy discourses. This theoretical position, although it values narrativity and discourse, is not post-structuralist in its outlook. In terms of ontology, it is post-positivist in that it sees discourse as an important part of social and institutional practice, and it does not see the individual as a fully self-interested and rational agent. However, it does not do away with the material circumstances, or with the very real, embodied aspects of identity construction. Therefore it does not see the individual as purely a social construction of various possible social roles or discursive interpellations, as in post-structuralist or post-modern theorisations (e.g. Archer 2008). It is critical-realist or social-realist in epistemological terms, that is, it sees the nature

of discourse and material reality as mutually constitutive but not of the same nature (e.g. Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999, Archer 2000), and it therefore sees individual identity as constructed in the realm of discourse (or social practice) and having effects on material reality at the same time. This theoretical stance will be further considered in the following chapter which establishes the methodological orientation of the research project.

Chapter 4. Narrative methods and methodological positioning of the researcher.

This chapter aims to move the discussion from the description of the specific policy context and key theoretical concepts related to the research topic towards a methodological orientation of the research project. The methodological orientation explains how the research questions have been approached and how data appropriate for analysis have been generated.

The first part of this chapter presents the methodological development of my research project, starting from the questions of epistemology and the research methodological orientation selected, going into a more in-depth consideration of the sources, characteristics and types of this methodology and its potential for the approach taken in this research. Further to that, the concrete approach to data generation and the data analysis process adopted, are also outlined. In the final part of the chapter, the related issue of ethics, and the role and positioning of the researcher are considered, as well as the connections between the researcher's own institutional positioning and biography and those of the research subjects.

4.1 The epistemological orientation of the research project and the methodology selected.

My research questions focus on the role and effects of internationalisation in producing academic identities and practices, as well as academics' positioning in the processes of higher

education change in post-socialist countries, which have undergone a transition from a closed socialist system of economy (and of higher education) to various new forms of capitalistic or Westernising systems.

The methodology selected for this research project is life history or narrative research which belongs to the broad category of qualitative research. In short, it is aiming to produce rich data from individual academics on the basis of life story interviews.

Broadly speaking, narrative methods go hand in hand with two epistemological orientations: an interpretivist stance that values the experiences of individuals as sources of knowledge of phenomena, and the post-positivist stance that focuses on the social construction of identity and social relationships by human beings themselves or their discursive positions in social contexts (Roberts, 2002: 7). Some practitioners of the biographical and narrative methods firmly subscribe to the post-positivist (post-structuralist or postmodern) epistemological stance (Czarniawska, 2004; Shacklock and Thorp, 2005; Denzin, 1989) and others see that position as not really tenable in educational research which presupposes a preoccupation with subjectivity as an expression of real experiences (Lieblich et al., 1998: 7).

The general orientation of my research is qualitative in terms of research methodology and critical realist in terms of theoretical perspective. I believe such a combination of the narrative/biographical method with a critical realist approach fits my research purpose considering its theoretical interest in the building of internationalised academic identities. A critical realist stance presupposes that both material reality and discursive expression mutually

influence each other (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999), though this stance is less readily associated with the narrative method, which may be challenged as supporting the individual and particular story over and above larger social analysis. My methodological approach implies an epistemology based on the construction of identities through discourse or representation, or narration, but not completely independently from the material reality of the lived experience. The role of the material and embodied life is particularly visible in the social realist stance of Archer (2000). Indeed, the material reality of late modernity demands and makes possible that discourse and the individual both play more and more central role in its creation, as has been discussed in the previous chapter. This position presupposes that narratives have simultaneously a strong relation to historical or sociological contexts, and also may depart from them in the creation of the individual story. This is well summarised by Robertson (2002: 8) as a pragmatic position:

There has to be a basis in the material world including the embedded institutions, core structures, and evident body realities in which individual existence is situated. Life stories commonly refer to 'real' events and experiences... Nevertheless, how these events and experiences are perceived and selected (even chronologically ordered and changed over time) and placed within understandings of the individual life - by metaphor, myth, and so on - are necessary aspects of analysis. A constructionist view can be used to help to analyse how the tellers shape the telling of their experiences of particular events - how the reality (for them) is formed through the account.

There are other categorisations of the epistemological stances available in this methodological approach. For example, Atkinson (2002: 123-124) distinguishes between the 'constructionist' or inter-subjective and the 'naturalistic' or the subject-centred epistemological stance as two

most popular epistemological perspectives among life history researchers. The former assumes that any life history is a discursive co-construction (between the teller and the listener), while the latter attempts to view the produced narrative as essentially the coherent product of the subject telling the story. I believe that the research interview context may influence the produced narrative, while the produced narrative still essentially represents the interviewee's internal understanding of their own identity held at that particular time. This dialectic is well summarised by Shacklock and Thorp (2005: 156): "Life histories allow the inquirer to introduce additional anchor points for understanding the subjective and the structural as mutual informants in understanding our own and other people's lives".

4.2 Characteristics of narrative methods as a specific form of qualitative social science methodology.

Although ethnographic and in-depth interview methods could be a good match for my research interest, as both allow for a qualitative and focused study of individuals and the uncovering of their institutional and discursive positions, I argue that the 'best match' is provided by the methodological orientations and approaches of narrative research or life history research. This form of research is based on linguistic expressions of a life narrative most commonly generated in interview situations where the interviewee is asked to share either specific sections of their life or the narrative of their whole life (Miller, 2000: 2). This produces qualitative and in-depth study of the person's subjective understanding of the 'essence' of their life (Atkinson, 2002: 123). This approach is particularly useful for the study of individual constructions of identity, learning experiences, life course progression, amidst

various aspects of broader social change or social context: 'a storied narrative is the linguistic form that preserves the complexity of human action with its interrelationship of temporal sequence, human motivation, chance happenings, and changing interpersonal and environmental context' (Polkinghorne, 1995: 7).

As with all qualitative methods, it is characterised by flexibility in its design and continual redesign of the method; it often involves simultaneous or cyclical data collection and analysis (Burgess, 1985: 7-8). This method also implies that the researcher's autobiography may be a source of research orientation, and it will certainly impact on the analysis of data through ongoing reflection (Roberts, 2002: 13). Like other qualitative methods, for example those based on other kinds of interviewing, using key informants or observation and ethnography, the life history methodology is well suited for researching incidents, experiences as well as norms and practices, or simply meanings that are attached to events by their participants (Roberts, 2002: 3). Moreover, it is obviously a methodology specially relevant and efficient for studying individual histories in context (Burgess, 1985: 3), in this case, in the educational contexts of curricular, institutional or societal change. One specific feature of biographical or narrative research is that there is no clear-cut testable hypothesis to start with - the direction of the study emerges out of a dialogical engagement between the storytellers, the underpinning theories and the researcher's changing interpretations of them (Lieblich, 1998: 10).

This methodology is increasingly employed in social science and humanities research, and at their intersection (Blumenfeld-Jones, 1995); oral history, biography, life history, narrative

analysis, reminiscence, and life review are just some of the specific methods that share ‘a focus on the recording and interpretation by some means or other of the life experience of individuals’ (Bornat, 2003: 35) The origins of the method are variously attributed to developments within historiography and the oral history tradition, to early sociological studies of emigrant lives, to comparative linguistics, literary theory, psychology (Freud and Human development studies), counselling, folklore studies and anthropology (Atkinson, 2002; Miller, 2000; Czarniawska, 2004; Bornat, 2003; Rosenthal, 2003; Roberts, 2002)

In humanities, broadly defined, it is the underlying focus on the story as a representation of narrative cognition which underlies the validity and popularity of narrative methods. According to many authors, narrative knowledge is a way of knowing which is as valuable in understanding human action and events as the logical-scientific form of cognition more often used in social-science research. The human capacity for narrative cognition based on plot structures and specific human experience of time (Ricoeur, 1983: 52). The culturally widespread need to represent life and experiences in the form of a story (whether fictional or historical or personal) accounts for the appeal of the methodology to many researchers (Atkinson, 2002; Shacklock and Thorp, 2005; Cortazzi, 1993). This sort of research often focuses on the most widespread story-telling components and the specific formal structures or elements of the narrative itself.

History may be credited with the development of oral history as a new and interdisciplinary approach to studying recent and social history, and as part of the twentieth century methodological proliferation of ways to research and reconstruct various histories, particularly

social history, women's history, and global history. This method aims to help illuminate historical change and specific events or specific group's experiences through a focus on the meaning - making process and on the individual as a witness to their community and its transformations. Hobsbawm argues that much methodological sophistication is still missing from this form of grassroots history because of historians' lack of knowledge of the problems of human memory and because the historical source has to be produced for the specific research question rather than discovered (Hobsbawm, 1997). Therefore, in history this method would often be used in conjunction with other available documents in order to recreate a specific perspective on an event or era without relying exclusively on the reminiscence of particular individuals. Still, some excellent examples of the approach, dealing largely with twentieth century phenomena, do manage to engage deeply with the intersections of subjectivity and social structure by relying on stories as primary data for analysis. These studies often reproduce cultural collective representations of a class or a social context as part of individual storytelling through use of symbols, myths, humour or religious concepts (Portelli, 1997; Passerini, 1987).

In sociology, to some extent because of the influence of oral history, and to some extent through revisiting early research using single case studies of individual lives, the life story is often seen a mere background or illustration for the study of social transformation, but there has also been a proliferation of narrative, biographical or autobiographical methods in the discipline (Rosenthal, 2003) which have more complex intentions, focusing on key questions of identity (such as gender, class or other social grouping) and on social change. These methods rely on the ability of the researcher to exercise 'sociological imagination' (Mills

1959), in linking the individual's biography to larger accounts of social processes and theoretical concepts of social structure.

The narrative tradition has made significant contribution to the study of individuals in educational settings, and educational research is credited with being at the forefront of this methodological development (Roberts, 2002: 23). Women educators have employed autobiographical accounts, particularly in feminist research in education (e.g. David, 2002; Deem, 1996). Some of the researchers using this approach have focused on the deeply conflicting or non-unitary' stories of the self in education (Bloom and Munro, 1995). The stories of professional development and of the working lives of teachers and educators have also been suggested as the starting point to a more collaborative inquiry into the practices of teaching, with attention to the practitioner's 'voice', their professionalism, and their centrality in 'delivering' education (Goodson, 1991). In general, educationally motivated life history research focuses on the need to connect the private and professional life of teachers and to engage with the perspectives of teachers as otherwise excluded agents of policy debates (Goodson and Sikes, 2001). Some research on teaching and learning experiences has also taken the narrative approach (Cortazzi, 1993), which is seen as particularly promising in combination with international or comparative perspectives or research foci (Trahar, 2006). In this specific context, this new focus is justified by the need of international and comparative education to overcome national boundaries and cultural divisions by listening to voices across borders (Fox, 2006: 48), and it is hoped that these international voices, generated through narrative research may 'drive comparative and international research to assist educators in using dialogue to explore hegemony and create opportunities for change' (Trahar, 2006: 15).

Narrative inquiry has its own criteria of validity that distinguish it from some other qualitative methods and from all quantitative or computational methods. Among such criteria, persuasiveness, adequacy, accessibility, trustworthiness coherence, explanatory power have been proposed (Hatch and Wisniewski, 1995). This need for different criteria of validity largely comes out of the acknowledgement that this research format is unashamedly subjectively constructed by both informants and the researcher (Goodson and Sikes, 2001; Denzin, 1989).

In this type of research, in-depth understanding of particular human action or experience is sought as a means of illuminating the particular case or set of cases with their similarities and differences, but it does not aim to predict or explain actions or the totality of events: 'the cumulative effect of narrative reasoning is a collection of cases where thought moves from case to case instead of from case to generalisation' (Polkinghorne, 1995: 11). The key criteria of narrative analysis include fidelity of subsequent analytical explanations to the original story, and believability of the analysis, that is the extent to which the meanings or narratives produced by the researcher resonate with the experiences of the story teller:

First, the narrative inquirer must maintain fidelity both towards the story of a person (and what the person makes of his or her story) and towards what the person may not be able to articulate about the story and its meanings (the context in which the story exists). Second, what the original teller makes of his or her own story is bounded by her or his purposes in telling the story. This reminds us that even the original teller is also reconstructing the narrative. To make the situation still more complex, the narrative inquirer must remember that he or she has

intentions and is reconstructing as well. Narrative inquiry is an artificial endeavour existing within layers of intention and reconstruction. (Blumenfeld-Jones, 1995: 28)

Another criterion for evaluating this sort of research may also be the degree of explanatory fit, or plausibility, or persuasiveness of the analysis of the stories produced by the researcher. The explanatory fit emerges as a result of rigorous and repeated movement between the narrative data and emerging interpretations. The movement is meant to ensure that the final story is truly exhaustive and saturated by the data available, either from the interview transcript itself, or from additional interviews and other documents (Polkinghorne, 1995: 13; Rosenthal, 2003: 55-57). Ultimately, Roberts claims that ‘the vital issue could be the quality of the theoretical reasoning rather than questions of representativeness’, and these need to match the goals of the research project, which could be the generation or validation of a theory, gaining new conceptual insights or illustrating existing theories (Roberts, 2002: 12).

My research does not attempt to create a breadth of coverage across a specific population or cohort or generation. Nor is it concerned with understanding the diversity of views of representatives of one particular institution or context. Instead of generalisability, we may hopefully talk about comparativity across similar cases, and ‘translatability’ understood as fit of the research design for its purpose (Schoefield, 2007: 187). The purpose of this approach is to gain sociological depth in the analysis of the experiences and effects of the emerging, internationalised academic identity and practice, but not leading to generalisations about an entire university system. The nature of my research is largely exploratory or critical and aimed at creating new conceptual insights for which this research approach seems fitting:

The appeal of biographical research is that it is exploring, in diverse methodological and interpretive ways, how individual accounts of life experience can be understood within the contemporary cultural and structural settings and is thereby helping to chart major social changes that are underway, but not merely at some broad social level (Roberts, 2002: 5)

4.3 Building the data gathering and data analysis process.

The narrative and life history research is in fact a large and inter-disciplinary set of methodologies or ‘genres’ of research (Portelli, 1997: 4-5). The difference between ‘genres’ is often not so much at the stage of finding and recording narratives or life histories but at the stage of analysis of the findings. The main difference here is that in some types of research the biographical narratives are often treated as sources of data to be taken more or less at face value, whereas many narrative researchers are predominantly interested in how the stories are made, their structure and the way of knowing this produces. Polkinghorne (1995) distinguishes between the ‘analysis of narratives’ that focuses on paradigmatic inquiry similar to qualitative interview analysis, relying on coding transcribed material and resulting in typologies, categories and taxonomies (that is analytical categories and results) that hold across the stories, and ‘narrative analysis’, which relies on synthesis of data more than its analysis; and results in stories, case studies, histories or episodes (that is, also narratives of some kind). In the case of ‘narrative analysis’, many researchers in social science have taken life narrative research closer to literary analysis by employing literary dimensions and categories of analysis or arguing for their usefulness (Blumenfeld-Jones, 1995: 28-31).

Others distinguish between the use of ‘narratives for other research purposes’ (that is for qualitative research of various kinds) and the ‘narrative analysis proper’ where the narrative itself is the focus of research (Lieblich et al., 1998: 3-6). From the point of view of narrative methods used ‘for other research purposes’, the narrative is treated similarly to interview data and the researcher either deducts some categories of analysis from theories or inducts them from the empirical material of the narrative itself. In the case of ‘narrative analysis proper’, Lieblich (et al.) propose two dimensions of analysis: the preoccupation with the whole story (holistic) or its parts (categorical), as one dimension of analysis, and preoccupation with content aspects of the story versus aspects of its form as the second dimension. This may be understood as producing four analytical orientations: holistic-content, holistic-form, categorical-content, categorical-form options of analysis.

My own research interest lies on the side of ‘analysis of narratives’ more than ‘narrative analysis’ in the sense of a preoccupation with narrative form in itself. The focus on the whole story seen through the lens of literary forms (‘holistic-form’ analysis) does not seem the most appropriate because there a clear focus in this research on identity and practice derived from experiences of internationalisation. In the case of my research project both the ‘holistic-content’ and ‘categorical-content’ approaches to the narrative data are useful, as they allow me to focus on both the explicit and the implicit meanings produced within the narrative, and on the overall stories as exemplars of a certain type of identity formation for which the entire life construction has to be considered.

In fact, narrative analysis can be usefully combined with some additional qualitative interviewing techniques, if the narrative itself has not addressed specific related topics of interest, such as current professional practice, evaluations of concrete processes going on in the environment, specific dimensions of past experiences or thoughts for the future. In this sense, the narrative can be built up with the help of the interviewer. This of course may no longer be narrative research in the strict sense of analysing the totality of a particular narrative in whatever format this narrative is generated; it becomes instead a methodology of qualitative research focused on specific experiences that can be accessed as stories or narratives. In many oral history researchers however, this is not unusual: the interviewer is responsible for asking relevant questions about the historical moment or the life that is being investigated, often over and above the conversational support or clarification questions. Therefore, in the interview, the generation of a coherent narrative can lead to a situation where additional questions are asked and the material generated thus is used to build a case study of individual professional progression.

In my own interview construction I decided to focus on the following interviewing stages:

- 1) warm up and introductory questions focusing on gaining basic information about current work position, main projects or preoccupations, main activities of the past academic year, etc.
- 2) Narrative-eliciting questions, asking for the interviewee to recount in as much detail as possible, as a story, the process of academic professional formation. This was to be elicited by asking about the most important or defining stages of educational and professional development, or by asking the interviewee to think of main events or

turning points in their professional autobiography. Sometimes an explicit story-making prompt was used.

- 3) Additional qualitative questions- these questions were used to elicit more reflection regarding key thematic interests of the research questions, such as the person's concrete research and teaching practices, relationship with colleagues in the department, evaluations of national and institutional reform process.

These interviewing approaches resulted in life narratives of varied lengths, which were not usually interrupted by specific questions, other than by basic clarification questions and general supporting statements.

In my own research approach, after the interview generation, came the stage of initial data analysis based on work done on the complete interview transcript. Firstly, this means that I took the data of a biographical narrative and turned them into a 'narrative case reconstruction' or simply a complete narrative whose purpose was to capture some of the most significant identity work (Bornat, 2003: 42- 43). I have called this first stage '**holistic synthesis**' stage in which I tried to reconstruct the overall progression of each narrative, linking as much as possible of the transcribed text to the emerging story. This meant that issues recalled later on in the interview, related to earlier events, were put in more or less chronological or thematic order thus extending the story as a life narrative with me as the researcher already making analytical choices of what material from the transcript was to constitute the whole case. The intention here was to make initial sense of the case and make it as extensive and coherent as possible in terms of using the available transcript.

Following this early data reconstruction, two strategies of data analysis were used:

1) **holistic analysis** where I tried to make sense of the whole story in relation to other stories, looking at how internationalisation and individualisation were present in each case. The purpose was to build an understanding of the most important features of all the experiences present, as experiences of internationalisation. In other words, this analysis aimed at understanding the broad similarities and differences of experiences of internationalisation.

2) **analytical synthesis** where I looked across the produced stories regarding specific categories or typologies of the story, such as: which specific individualisation narratives were used, how gender was experienced and represented, how other identities were used in relation to the professional one. This allowed me to make sense of the different identity building components or effects of internationalisation understood as individualisation, or to focus more on the difference between the narratives in this regard. These approaches together were taken as underlying material for addressing Research Question 1, dealing with internationalisation and individual academic identity building.

Quite apart from this narrative approach, more typical qualitative interviewing coding approaches were also used to look across the individual cases regarding particular subsets of issues related to the Research Question 2; dealing with the impact of internationalisation on specific aspects of academic work and with attitudes towards local university transformations. Here, my main preoccupation was to develop categories of analysis that would relate to the practices and policy-related attitudes emerging out of internationalisation. In producing these categories, I looked across the whole interview transcripts as well as my case reconstructions

to list as many relevant data in each broad ‘coding bundle’ as possible. The ‘coding bundles’ were files for collecting all the relevant experiences classified under specific headings, and they concerned broadly speaking. Within those coding bundles all relevant material from the transcripts was collected and categorised. The categorisation aimed at putting similar experiences, practices and meanings together and giving these subsets a name that pinpointed or categorised the specific meaning generated. This general research approach, based broadly on the qualitative interview methods in education (e.g. Alexiadou, 2000) allowed me to classify the findings related to specific subsets of academic practice as present across the interviews and therefore to develop a purely **analytical-content** approach to the data.

Figure 1 below, presents this overall analytical approach in a visual form:

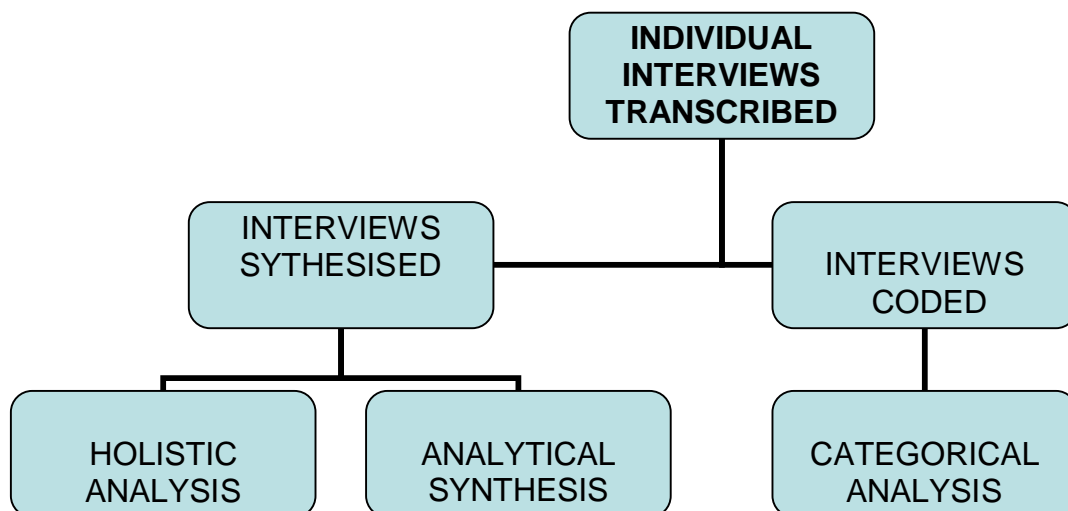


Figure 1. The analytical approach to data analysis.

4.4 The interviewees and research locations.

The focus of this research project is on academics in Eastern Europe, particularly on their experiences of international mobility during 1990s - early 2000s, that is, during and immediately post the transition period, and during the increasingly important Europeanisation policy stage. Using my international institutional network as a starting point for finding informants (see section 2.3 in Chapter 2 for an initial discussion of this context, and the next section in this chapter for a fuller discussion), I interviewed 25 academics and transcribed and analysed 20 interviews. Some of the interviews did not record properly and had to be abandoned and a couple were dropped from analysis because I had found a wealth of material by that stage, achieving a saturation of my analytical categories. The interviews generated around 150 pages of transcribed text. My ongoing interpretation showed that all the interviews were building remarkably similar narratives, and I felt that the analysis of the 20 was enough for my analytical purpose.

All the interviewees came from social science and humanities. Table 1 below, lists the main characteristics of the interviewees, in terms of nationality, disciplines, seniority level, age, gender, type of university of employment at the time of interview.

The interviews took place over several years (2004-2009) in my own institution (10), as well as in the interviewee's institutions (8), and two of the pilot stage interviews took place at a professional network meeting in a conference location. The access to interviewees was both

opportunistic (when interviews recorded in my university location are concerned), and some of the interviewees were suggested through an initial contact (when undertaken in the field at universities).

Pseudonym	Nationality	Discipline	Position	Gender	University
Artur	Russian	political philosophy	lecturer	male	new college at older university
Anton	Bulgarian	sociology	lecturer	male	research centre, state universities
Julius	Georgian	political science	senior lecturer	male	new private university
Gabriel	Romanian	sociology	senior lecturer	male	new private university
Amelia	Russian	history	lecturer	female	pedagogical university
Anastasia	Russian	history	senior lecturer	female	pedagogical university
Lukas	Georgian	history/philosophy	lecturer	male	new state university
Jakub	Georgian	political science	lecturer	male	state university, new department
Sofia	Russian	sociology	junior lecturer	female	state university
Milena	Bulgarian	political science	lecturer	female	state university
Tamar	Georgian	psychology	senior lecturer	female	state university
Igor	Ukrainian	economics	senior lecturer	male	state university, new department
Emil	Belorussian	sociology	junior lecturer	male	new private university
Davit	Armenian	history	junior lecturer	male	two established universities
Daria	Ukrainian	sociology	lecturer	female	state university, new department
Sergei	Russian	sociology	lecturer	male	new private university
Artem	Ukrainian	art history	lecturer	male	new postgraduate centre
Stefan	Romanian	sociology	lecturer	male	new state university
Katerina	Russian	criminology	lecturer	female	pedagogical university
Robert	Ukrainian	art history	lecturer	male	new postgraduate centre

Table 1. Basic background of each informant.

In general, the interviewees pursued a whole range of international experiences from short term study and research fellowships during the course of their studies (usually at postgraduate level) to whole MA and doctoral level qualifications. It can also be said that upon returning home they usually continued to seek other sources of funding to continue some form of international professional development. My own office was a source of shorter professional

development for majority of these interviewees (in twelve cases), and another program of my own institutional network was also used to help support their reintegration into the home educational system (at the same time offering further international networking and financial resources) in six cases. The same program also directly supported some of the institutions these academics worked in, also in six cases. Naturally, this means that what was being elicited was a story of the internationalisation that was impacted by the work of my own institutional network, concerned with producing a specific reform-orientation for higher education, and this aspect again will be studied further in the last analytical chapter (chapter 8). Nearly all of the interviewees would normally access other sources of funding, in order to attend international conferences or visit foreign libraries.

In the second table below, the actual individual experiences of internationalisation (or the most important experiences mentioned by the individual) are listed to offer a better orientation across the cases.

Artur	two doctorates (France, US)
Anton	research fellowship during doctoral study (Germany)
Julius	a semester and year long fellowships during doctoral study, US
Gabriel	Central European University (CEU) MA, year-long research fellowship, UK
Amelia	short research and teaching visits abroad (UK, Germany), coordinated an international program
Anastasia	short research trips abroad (UK, Germany), semester long research fellowship (CEU)
Lukas	CEU MA , Second undergraduate (Belgium), CEU PhD, US MA
Jakub	CEU MA, US MA
Sofia	CEU MA
Milena	CEU MA, MPhil
Tamar	Several short and one longer research support trips/fellowships, UK, US
Igor	semester and year long research fellowships, US
Emil	CEU MA, Polish/CEU PhD, international research project, Germany
Davit	CEU MA
Daria	MA (Hungary), MSc, UK
Sergei	second doctorate, US
Artem	MA, CEU
Stefan	short research visit, France, international conferences
Katerina	MA, US
Robert	year long development program, US, CEU MA

Table 2. Main internationalisation experiences of each informant.

4.5 The specific institutional positioning of the researcher.

The institutional context of the research is a network of organisations sometimes referred to as “the Soros network”, consisting of mainly of Open Society Foundations (previously Open Society Institute and National Soros Foundations) to which Central European University is partially affiliated as a ‘sister organisation’

The mission of the entire network in existence since the beginning of the transition process, is to assist the democratisation process and to create ‘open societies’ in post-communist countries and in other developing countries, and the source for all its operations are the philanthropic actions and large donations of a single individual, an American multimillionaire of Hungarian origin, George Soros. The network has ambitions of being a non-governmental and transnational policy actor (Stone, 2008), aiming to orient reform towards democratisation, rule of law, human rights and the building of strong civil society. This is realised through a multitude of programs and departments offering financial resources to local partner organisations, running their own programs and interventions, and engaging in research and advocacy on selected issues. Of course, this very clearly involves a project of supporting a degree of economic transformation of societies towards the capitalist and liberal-democratic model and away from communist, nationalist, totalitarian models of state and society.

This network, in which I am institutionally positioned, consists of many institutions: National Soros Foundations operating in various countries in the region of operations (post-socialist and post-communist countries and some other developing country locations), and the central

institution of the network: Open Society Foundations (consisting of two main offices in Budapest and New York, and a few other offices in Europe). The OSF operates a number of programs in various areas of interest, from higher education development, to the rule of law, local government development, policy formulation, Roma rights, women's rights and others. Stone assesses its significance:

The OSI [OSF] provides an excellent case study of the strategies of transnational activism of private philanthropy. It is an institutional mechanism for the international diffusion of expertise and 'best practices' to post communist countries and other democratizing nations. (Stone, 2008: 2)

Due to a partially overlapping interests and location and the same main founder the OSF network is affiliated with Central European University, which is an independently endowed, private graduate university, offering degrees in social sciences, law, business, and environmental science.

This university, which is a specific part of the network, is an American university in Central Europe. The university is both firmly Western and partially also Central European. My particular workplace has been fulfilling part of the university's traditional regional mission of producing or supporting 'open societies' through outreach programs dedicated to working with academics in other regional universities. It is therefore, a space whose very existence entails and makes possible mobility for the participants through various programs related to higher education. My own unit is located between two institutions of the network (OSF programs and CEU). The department is administratively a unit of CEU, and our mission is to share CEU's resources to help the region we work in. To this end we work with CEU

academics, library and all relevant units to provide programs and resources for the academics who participate in our programs. This forms a unique institutional model of linking academics in the region with CEU, with our own office, and with OSF, and to date the specific format has engaged several thousands academics in around 26 countries. The majority of my interviewees have participated in not one but several programs of this broadly defined network, and often work in institutions who have received direct help from the network in terms of financial support for their development.

Being positioned in this particular department means working with university lecturers, alumni, other professors from the region who are involved in international programs, as well as those who are trying to make use of international programs and English language literature (and pedagogies) for the first time. My own position could also be described as someone who is an agent of this transformation (internationalisation) for some of the visiting faculty, or a link with their international experiences for others.

It is through this institutional network that most of the interviewees were contacted. The sampling approach (Goodson, 2001: 25) was purposive - I was interested in interviewing academics and teaching assistants with an international experience of a certain generation and geographical origin; and it was opportunistic - that is based on those individuals I could access in my own professional network over the course of the research years.

My current institutional and professional positioning, probably as much as my own life experiences, provides an ongoing justification of this research interest. Since I began working

in my department in the summer of 2003, I had come across hundreds of academics from the entire post-communist region in various professional events. These encounters have provided numerous insights into the different ways internationalisation impacts individual academics, the uses to which it may be put in their practice, and the difficulties it may create for their sense of their professional self or their career progression and working lives.

If I had to summarise these pre-analysis and pre-research glimpses of ‘data’, which offered points of departure for the study of the impact of internationalisation on academic identity and practice, I would have to point out just some features of the experience. In some cases, I was struck by the potential importance of the process for many academics. For example, one Estonian academic once recounted to me how she really learnt research skills whilst doing a short scholarship abroad during her doctoral years. She used the metaphor of a light getting switched on for the first time, signifying things falling into place for her as a researcher, after a long period of ‘darkness’ and confusion experienced at home. The learning moment was apparently enabled by the different supervisory styles she experienced when away. It was a comparative perspective of ‘home’ and ‘away’ that turned up time and time again in many conversations. Another Russian academic spoke of becoming a different person after her graduate degree in Germany; she claimed to hardly remember what she was like or what she was thinking before that time abroad, even though she had resumed working at the same department she had originally left as a student. There was hardly a more blunt way of stating that this experience had created or changed her as an academic, even though it was obviously short in comparison to other phases of her educational history and to her current work experience. These small disclosures of aspects of private narratives suggested that

internationalisation can be understood as a truly productive aspect of academic identity construction, or at least a productive discursive resource for portraying a different/newer academic identity.

What was particularly puzzling, was that very similar experiences and meanings were related by graduate students and professionals from a considerable range of post-communist countries. It seemed at first glance as if they had truly come from very similar systems of education. Of course particular experiences were highlighted, valued and used differently by the individuals, depending but it was clear across these differences that the experience was both shared and productive.

4.6 The narrative account of the research orientation: the researcher's biography.

The private story of the researcher is not usually provided in a research report, though it seems to some extent inevitable if life history methods generated by a practitioner have been selected. It may seem that such an account runs the risk of being more self-indulgent than reflective or critical, and yet my story does link and may also contrast with the stories of the individuals I research, - something that I have needed to become very aware of. Richardson's (2000) poststructuralist 'pleated text' on the politics of a sociology department was an inspirational starting point for my own journey of self-reflection at the beginning of the research process:

The story of a life is less than the actual life, because the story told is selective, partial, contextually constructed and because the life is not yet over. But the story of a life is also more than the life, the contours and meanings allegorically extending to others, others seeing

themselves, knowing themselves through another's life story, re-visioning their own, arriving where they started, and knowing "the place for the first time" (Richardson, 2000: 158)

Moreover, the underlying interest in the very topic of internationalisation of academic identity was first derived from my own life, and only after that, from my every day work experience in my institutional context.

In the autobiographical account given below, I start by identifying some key life experiences understood (self-constructed) as turning points marking out major periods, and I continue by discussing 'critical moments' and motivations for some significant decisions in the recent past. All the selected aspects of the biography are meant to testify briefly to my own experiences of internationalisation and they do not represent the whole life story, but they do represent my educational and professional autobiography more or less from its beginning to the present moment.

The year 1989 was the beginning of transition from the communist regime towards democracy and market economy in Poland. I was fifteen and had just started at the same Gdansk secondary school where my mother worked all her professional life as a physics teacher. My family had been first generation professionals with higher education degrees, my grandparents having immigrated into the city after the war from southern and eastern Poland. The Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk, a site of resistance of workers to the communist regime, stood right opposite my secondary school, and I often witnessed demonstrations there or in its vicinity. At fifteen, I had my personal transitions and regimes of school, adolescence and a troubled family life to worry about and, seemingly I had very little political-sociological

awareness. Nevertheless, I was entering young adulthood in a moment marked by historical change and that is when my educational story took shape and my individual identity begun to be formed. My learning at the high school was both tedious and full of humiliation, with my grades and my confidence in the humanities getting lower and due to my rebellion against the all-prevailing prestige of the science subjects. There was no social science alternative available or known to me at that time. During the whole of my high school career until I got into university, I was supported by my just divorced mother (in itself another defining moment of my life at fifteen), and retired grandparents, right at the time of the most difficult economic transition.

Around the same time, I experienced my first contact with the inhabitants of countries outside the communist block, previously understood rather as Hollywood film stories: desirable in a very vague way but not accessible at all, almost not real. Arriving in Milan in the winter for a school exchange trip, which it suddenly became possible to organise during the first months of the new political situation, aged 15, in very strange clothes by the local standards, I took a look at the gleaming shop windows and was quite shocked to realise where I came from in economic and political terms. It was not so much the realisation that shops, houses and whole towns could look so prosperous, but the knowledge that in comparison, I came from a world of relative poverty that allowed me to gain a sense of socio-economic and cultural difference and a curiosity to explore this further. This was the first time in my life I truly encountered different national and cultural patterns of behaviour, and understood the meaning and purpose of foreign languages. The one week in the winter of that year ‘hanging out’ with my peers in a

medieval Italian town was probably as significant as any future extended experiences of internationalisation.

The enjoyment I felt communicating with my well dressed Italian peers in my very elementary English sparked a motivation for learning foreign languages, which later would take me to university and which meant that new experiences, identity and sense of self could emerge. Of course, it was the beginning of a process of Westernisation of my education, and of relatively early and profound ‘individualisation’ away from the closely knit family-oriented and collectivist society. Only a year later, I had already completed a course in Italian both in Poland and in Florence where I spent two months (on a scholarship from the local council of education). I was able to communicate fluently with my Italian friends in their own language, which meant also an ability to participate in their ways of being at least partially. The association between having a foreign language and a literally open world of possibilities and cultural meanings was set in my mind at that time, and this determines my multicultural outlook on life to day. Other school exchanges (to Denmark) followed and provided the highlight of my high school experience. English language took over in importance by the second year of high school and going to university to study it became the only acceptable and the obviously practical choice. It linked enough with my interest in humanities and provided that all-important window onto the world in which I wanted to exist. When studying English I also took every opportunity to travel to UK, and US for student and summer jobs (starting right after my final high school exam).

My academic choice of English philology meant that my entire university education was spent interacting, writing and thinking in English and in general (believing like I was) becoming someone half English in mindset, whilst never moving from Poland for more than a couple of months. I was very aware that we were being educated as if outside the local environment, at that time a strange breed of Poles with British or American accents, teaching English, having foreign friends, watching movies 'in the original'. Some of our professors were British or American, others bilingual and bi-national and still others were just graduates of the same department, but some of them clearly leading 'internationalised' lives. I had graduated from the English Philology department in Gdansk in 1999 with a thesis in cognitive linguistics. I had a strong but unfulfilled interest in gender studies and feminism which I had acquired through my exposure to sociolinguistics but which was much extended due to my participation in two additional courses led by a visiting American professor at the sociology department. These courses were also my first entrance into 'the Soros network' which had a program sending foreign teachers to post-communist countries. Significantly, these two courses (or the attention of the above mentioned professor) led to my first international (student) conference that took place at CEU, and even resulted in a published paper.

My first year spent at CEU as a post-graduate student in the Gender Studies department led to many new personal relationships and a new life with lots of friends of equally international character, to an academic partner also working at the university, but also to further research scholarships and degree programs I was now able to get access to. In many ways, it is at this stage of my life that internationalisation had become the main basis of my academic and professional as well as personal identity. It had provided a completely new life trajectory that

can be traced back to 1989 as a starting point. The year 1999 when I arrived at CEU completed this transformation. Most importantly, it provided me with a new personal identity and cross-cultural and intellectual confidence which I had never felt up till that point.

Four years later, after the time of EU accession of the ten countries including Poland, I embarked on my doctorate at Keele, whilst already working for the outreach department of my American university (still part of the Soros network I entered as a student in that conference in 1998), where now I provide training and administer programs for faculty from an entire post-communist region. As a 'graduate' of the Soros network, I have been in a position to work for programs similar to the one I myself had benefited from as a student. My first American sociology professor has become a good friend as we teach on a summer program together.

My internationalised life style has become the 'normal' life. My current closest professional collaborators are located in other countries. Among my closest friends there are no more than two individuals who come from the same country. Thus, in the choice of my profession, in private life, and in social settings I still continue to lead an internationalised life as well as to contribute to the internationalisation of other professionals. I am not unusual among my 'cohort', since many of my university friends, particularly from the postgraduate years, now lead similar lives, often living in different countries, sometimes having a second citizenship and raising bilingual, or trilingual children, very often working for international organisations and European institutions.

Though the ‘transition’ of my country made my entire particular story and my educational development possible, as part of the first generation of internationalised or globalised young professionals/academics, I also feel that my agency and individual history have played an important part. Internationalisation clearly seems a meaningful and a productive aspect of my identity as I had made that process perhaps the most defining characteristic of my adult life to date.

The story above is only a starting point for my research interest, it is in no way the research interest itself, it merely illustrates that there is a personal autobiographical justification for how I became interested in internationalisation or got a ‘hunch’ that it is indeed meaningful and deserves to be further studied. What part internationalisation plays in academic identity and professional practice among my interviewees may be very different from my own life; my main expectation was that it plays a definite part, for better or worse. It also means a realisation that as a researcher, I may be inserting meanings generated through my experience into the construction and the analysis of the research process, hopefully self-reflectively and with an appropriate dosage of the sociological imagination and critical thinking.

The initial starting point for the research project was that the experience of internationalisation is clearly not something specific to me, it is probably more commonplace now than in 1989. Academics from Eastern Europe coming into the profession now may well be far more exposed to formal opportunities for this form of engagement than was I as a high school first year student.

For others, in other locations, and other social circumstances, it may be a much more difficult and problematic aspect of the higher education profession and of their own lives. I also needed to remain aware that the process may be far more contradictory, partial and problematic. For research purposes, my attention is particularly on those individuals, who, unlike me, have returned or remained in their home country for a more sustained period of their working life. The questions of how they use their experiences have been of particular interest to me in developing this project.

4.7 The ethical dimension of narrative and biographical research.

Narrative research and life history interview share some of the same ethical problems with other qualitative, and especially, interview-based research methods and create their own ethical problems (Goodson and Sikes, 2001; Roberts, 2002). First of all, they require the assumption of power differential between the researcher responsible for theorisation and interpretation and the interviewee who supplies ‘the empirical material’, in this case, material of a very personal and subjective/sensitive nature. There is the problem of what kind of data can be revealed comfortably by the interviewee and what data can be shared at all when the informant does not know the final shape of the research report or its actual audience. The kind of data shared in this form of interview goes right to the core of the individual’s perception of self and the meaning of their lives and the resulting meanings can be disquieting (Goodson and Sikes, 2001). As Brockbank and McGill (1998: 178) state, the personal ‘story is selective in detail – not necessarily complete in communicating fact, but complete in communicating self. The “story” teller is taking a risk and knows it.’ The risk is on the personal level, in

exposing a fragment of the private self and experience for public scrutiny through the likely usage of personal detail and the personal subjective meaning and identity. Narrative research obviously requires careful setting up of the interview situation and securing informed consent which should be recorded or signed.

Of course, some of the ethical dilemmas arise also out of the institutional and sociological distance between the researcher and the informant, with questions of privilege, class, gender, culture and lifestyle mediating in the research process. In life history research, there is even a potential contradiction between the qualitative researcher's insistence on hiding the identities of informants, and the biographer's or historian's tendency to celebrate the life of the actual person. On the one hand by engaging in this type of research, the researcher gives priority to the individual as a conscious social being capable of their own distinctive 'voice' (Cortazzi, 2003; Goodson 1991), but on the other hand, that voice is more often than not edited heavily by the researcher and made anonymous in order to fulfil the research purpose.

However, despite the potentially ethically delicate nature of the many concerns that may arise at any stage in the process, from contacting of interviewees to final reporting of the interpretations of their stories, there are also some reported positive aspects of this particular qualitative methodology which might make the method ethically less problematic. Some researchers report that many people are quite happy to share aspects of their life story (especially when the elements shared do not concern major painful moments). When difficult situations are present in the story, some individuals may actually find the whole process quite 'therapeutic', as they allow for the construction of a meaningful narrative out of a difficult

experience, even though the listener is in not professionally trained to facilitate any such benefits.

Another positive aspect of the relationship is that life stories, unlike pre-prepared and researcher-controlled lists of specific topics and questions used in a standard interview, are a natural and familiar form of interaction, known and shared by the majority of human cultures. Finally, in the case of life stories of teachers or academics, bringing the attention away from aspects of their work life and practice and moving it to themselves and their life progression takes educational research from the scrutinising preoccupation with judging the teacher's behaviour in the classroom to understanding the 'teaching self' (Goodson, 1991). This means that teachers' actions are given meaning by the aspects of the self that the teacher exposes to the interviewer and it is the personality and the life of the individual that is valued, not only their work practices.

Also, life history research is often in fact an exchange of experiences, as it is quite appropriate for a certain degree of mutual disclosure or experience-sharing to take place. In the case of research with educators as subjects and education as the underlying theme, such partial (though never complete) collaboration may even stretch to elements of interpretation of the narrative or its key moments that will be provided on the spot by the interviewed teachers. There is a reflexive capacity for interviewees to begin to produce their own meta-level interpretations of their experiences generated through their own sociological imagination. In my own research, the interviewees are all researchers and many of them of the qualitative type; a few had a direct and expert understanding of the very methodology they were being

subjected to. Even non-sociologists were able to empathise with the general research purpose, if only by being able to consider how my research methods might not be so usual in their field.

In the case of research with teachers and academics, the usual distance present in making life history research of socially excluded and disadvantaged groups is much diminished. This is not to say that it disappears; in my case for example, there were rarely any perceived differences in class, but gender and ethnicity and location in the educational system were clearly different, even if some of the experiences or interpretations voiced by my interviewees were almost ‘identical’ to my own.

Therefore, the main conclusion regarding the ethical elements of this methodology is that it needs to be approached neither as a completely unproblematic one, nor as one always fraught with insurmountable ethical difficulties. My basic approach has been to seek voluntary consent and explain the purpose of the research. After the interview itself, my strategy was to answer as fully as possible any questions or concerns raised, though these most of the time seemed more driven by an empathic curiosity about the research project than by concerns with how the data will be used (this is not to say that concerns never arouse, they did in a very limited number of interviewees).

As far as the highly difficult question of whether to ask participants to confirm my transcript of their story or even its final interpretation, I found that doing that was highly impractical and would not serve any purpose. Ultimately, the responsibility of using the data ethically and

anonymously and striving for interpretations that are credible and persuasive is entirely with the researcher, as in this type of research they are partially responsible for the story that they receive (by requesting it and by collaborating in its production) and they are completely responsible for the use and interpretation of the story.

In concluding this methodological discussion, it needs to be pointed out that whilst this chapter has provided an academic account of the methodology considered for the research (in the first part of the chapter) and the account of the personal history and institutional positioning of the researcher (in the second part), the development of the methodology was a far more multilayered process. What has not been discussed too much but is an experience shared by qualitative researchers, especially those training in a new method or approach, is that much methodological conviction arose only as part of the experience of generating interviews and studying them. The interview protocol changed somewhat with further reading and new interview experiences. The narrative approach to the analysis had to develop only as I got more confident about the kind of data it produced. Also, contrary to some strict methodological advice that the life narrative should be as free of additional questions as possible till its ending, I became more confident about when to support, ask for clarification or for elaboration more explicitly than by using body language and non-verbal expressions. Similarly, my data analysis procedure was fully developed only after a number of interviews were fully transcribed and studied. This process occurred in combination with ongoing reading of various accounts of narrative approach from other authors, as well as directly from my own reading of the data. The following chapters will present the empirical results of the analysis described above, centred around the research questions of this thesis.

Chapter 5: Situating internationalisation in the context of transitional selves.

5.1 Introduction.

Before answering the Research Question 1, I need to outline what internationalisation is as a process in the context of actual lives of the individuals I interviewed, in relation to general key life stages and their effects for the overall construction of the self. This is particularly important in order not to lose track of some of the profoundly biographical and personal meanings of the material generated.

This chapter is the first of the analytical chapters aiming at the exploration of the narratives elicited through interviews and it focuses in particular on internationalisation as a process of individualisation, that is, the reflexive and perhaps contradictory creation of a self in response to the available social structure in the context of social transformations, such as, in particular, the transition and the formation of post transition society. My concern in this chapter is not with the specifics of the internationalisation experience as a way of forming an alternative academic identity, which is the subject of the next chapter. Instead, I will report some of the key discourses that structure the construction of the internationalised life as a narrative of overall individualisation process.

All life stories transcribed and ‘synthesised’ were considered in this chapter in order to account for the characteristics of the internationalization story as a specific type of personal narrative in the transition context. I will concentrate my writing on only some most significant elements in the life stories I have analysed, presenting a kind of broad ‘holistic analysis’ of the process of internationalization as individualisation in the lives studied in order to point out its general meanings that hold across several individual cases. My focus here was on accounting for the process as I understand it, based on the interviewees’ own constructions, but it is of course one possible story, one possible set of interpretations, based on the lived experience of the researcher as a reflective actor of the process studied, and also its ‘product’.

This form of analysis makes use of the notion of individualization as the key explanatory concept to make sense of the life story in the context under study. The process of individualisation is actually reflected/constructed through specific discourses, or narratives, and through textual ‘repertoires’, or simply broad textual choices of identity construction. Based on these key narratives, we can capture the social change aspect of these individuals’ experiences, such as the intermingling of new opportunities and established ways of being, of changing structural conditions and how they are used to create different lives and different life stories. In this case, the analytical interest is in finding the degree to which an internationalized academic life and the overall story of the self follows the theorisation of individualization.

A lot of the analysis relies on direct quotation from the life interviews.

5.2 The narrative of the problematic past as a trigger for internationalisation and individualisation.

In my sample of life narratives, the academics had experienced internationalization in the specific context of transition from state socialism into a market economy, leading to a new type of society, based on new capitalist/entrepreneurial/individualistic principles. One important marker of the transition itself, as a differentiation of life patterns, was a directly felt sense of discrediting the past as harmful to individual lives and to life chances of the interviewees.

For instance, for Sergei, an older interviewee in my sample, who completed his doctoral study under socialism in Russia before taking an opportunity to redo his entire doctoral education in the US (in a new discipline), the socialist period is clearly understood as an era of repression of individualism and of entrepreneurialism. His future Western re-orientation is signalled in the interview by a discussion of some Western cultural influences on his youth and the state system's repression of certain types of interests, marking the first important narrative of individualisation- that of wishing to go 'against the grain' of limited 'safe' life choices and considering taking more risky decisions:

So I was born in the Soviet Union, right? So in the Soviet Union there was not business and I mean, mostly, I came from this intelligentsia, you know the word 'intelligentsia', and that was a tradition to go down that path because people, there was no business, there were no other opportunities, that was a socialist state, and I had, during my school I had many things, I was interested in. I liked music, you know rock and blues, but at that time

there wasn't any, it was pretty much underground so my parents and I agreed that it was a very risky way to go.
(Sergei)

Moreover, the story of the early lives preceding and also explaining the desire for international experiences is in some cases a story of the assertion of individual freedom despite a limiting social context, sometimes presented as a kind of void of opportunity. For some of the older interviewees, the beginning of 1989 is understood as a systemic and, at the same time, a personal life change. This is well illustrated by Gabriel, who couches the systemic changes of 1989 in explicit terms as a revolution, and by Julius, who sees them as a liberation movement:

When I finished the university it was just two years before the change, before the revolutionary changes, the systemic changes. (Gabriel)

I actually just enrolled at the university like many thousands of Georgians and at that time it was faculty of history, so there was no political science, nothing, because it was 1989 and Soviet Union still was there and then, this time was very revolutionary for Georgia because national liberation movement started, people got involved, you know in politics and against communist regime and all this stuff just started. (Julius)

It is already visible that the story of the internationalised self in the transition period is a story of overcoming a lack or absence of adequate life choices often perceived as lack of personal and political freedom as well as a limited scope of intellectual development options. This narrative is strengthened when the negative and limiting influence of the state with its strict controlling effect on career in education is mentioned. For instance, these academics who graduated before 1989 in Eastern Europe and in the early 1990 in the former Soviet Union,

had to start their working lives in a compulsory placement in a school or high school for a period of two years as teachers. Anastasia, a Russian historian and Gabriel, a Romanian sociologist, illustrate this point:

So I have graduated from the university, and for two years I have taught, I worked in a school, an ordinary city school for two years. (Anastasia)

And although my professor would have liked to have me joining the university, that was not possible at that time because no appointments were made to university those years. So I had, I had to go and teach in a secondary school somewhere. I still, I was lucky not to be sent to a rural village, as the majority of my colleagues, but to a smaller, to a small city. (Gabriel)

In general, it is very clear that these narratives construct a story of individualisation, that is, of differentiation of the individual life story from the typical life story. Nothing points out to this discursive construction as well as one internationalised academic comparing his unusual choices of an alternative education: from a private high school, through an internationally-oriented, new undergraduate university to a foreign PhD program; as contrasted with the perceived 'normal' strategy of his contemporaries. In this interview, the Belorussian system is understood as still working today very much like in the communist times in the rest of the region:

Well, the state education system, it really works in this way that, this it really channels very well, it is effective in this way that it really can channel people's biographies, careers. Like, there is for instance a law that if you were not paying for your education you need to work for two years at the place where the state will decide you should work. [...] And so that means that very often, it's like first people are thinking 'OK how to get university?, who to bribe?, who to find?, et cetera, not to pay for the education. After that, after fourth year,

people start thinking, 'OK, what to do?, who to bribe?, et cetera, so as not to go to this two years [placement]. So it means, yeah, it's just an example, in this perspective people are really limited in their decisions about what they choose, about their choices. So they always have this perspective. (Emil)

It appears that at its very core, the appeal behind internationalisation in the transition context is a desire to break away from the mould, to experience some kind of alternative personal and professional identity formation, based on newer values that are associated with the post-socialist reality. Individual academic lives therefore bear witness to the process of social change in terms of reorientation of values and new aspirations for personal development. This is a key narrative of the formation of an alternative, internationalised self which is in many ways similar to my own personal story. It clearly shows the workings of individualisation, not so much in terms of the particular actions taken, but rather in terms of their later narrative evaluation in the life story.

5.3 The narrative of individualisation through choice of discipline.

The first and most important categorisation marking the beginnings of the individualisation process in the educational lives of the interviewed academics was choosing a specific social science as a field of specialisation for undergraduate study. This moment is the beginning of the life narrative itself for some of the interviewees. The undergraduate years were usually a special moment in the academic career, either because the discipline was also risky, new or simply because it marked the transition into adulthood in which individual choices of career were based in personal interests for the first time (thus representing one discourse of

individualisation). Sometimes, this involved purely personal interests, and in a few cases, the process was significantly facilitated by an academic role model:

And in spite of the fact that sociology was not recognised (...) subject at that time, still there was some space for sociological study, for sociological research, and under the impact, under the influence of this professor, I could develop myself, I became attracted and I became enthusiastically involved in sociological research about sociology, during the time when sociology, when sociological research was not welcome, was not recognised by the authorities. (Gabriel)

I was always interested in mythology and art so after my military service I saw a description of cultural studies department that they offer in, the specialisation was culture, myth and religion or something like this- myth, religion and art or something like this. So I entered there because of that. (Anton)

Some of the academics discussed their decision-making process in uncertain terms but still as something that was part of their own career choice, as Amelia's story illustrates:

So I didn't think about history much [at school] (...) I thought that I would maybe make some other career, I thought of mass communications [mass media] and maybe working with languages, sort of some linguistic things, when I was thinking about what I would become when I finish school. (...) I didn't pass entrance exams, so I even don't know why I thought of history. Maybe, because it meant for me, it was history and language. (...) I was especially interested in foreign cultures and foreign languages. So maybe that's why history, because it had that additional specialisation, so it prepared a teacher of history and a teacher of foreign languages, in my case it was English. So maybe that is why I selected this department. (Amelia)

As this first recalled adult decision making process marks one of the most important aspects of early scholarly lives of the academics interviewed it can be considered as a cornerstone of their individualization process.

In a very few cases, this part of the life progression was not an issue for a major narrative turning point (or rather it was not elaborated on in the particular life story interview), and was glossed over. This happened in some interviews when an attempt was made to provide a minimal biography comprising of the basic ‘facts’, with minimal discussion and narrative interpretation, perhaps because early on in the interview situation, they had not expected to have to tell a long life story. This type of account is provided by Artem:

Well, I started my studies here, at this university, [the local] National university, I studied here, I graduated from philosophy in 1993, I have a diploma in philosophy and I am a specialist in philosophy. (Artem)

5.3 The narratives of internationalisation as transformative of the self.

For most of the interviewees, one of the most important experiences leading to the individualisation of identity was the first experience of internationalisation. In the majority of cases, the faculty perceived their international experiences as a new chapter in their academic life as well as in their more personal identity-construction, based on cosmopolitanism or internationalism. Gabriel, for example, sees his internationalisation as an emotionally and intellectually transforming stage in his life:

(...) you know in 1992 the world opened to me, a new world in fact, a new experience, absolutely new experience, coming from a closed society, and having this huge world with so many people, young people, from so many countries, and so many famous professors from universities from around the world, and when I came back I felt that no one has this experience at this particular place (...) (Gabriel)

In a few cases the new internationalised self is presented as itself an object of desire for continuous self-construction. Davit and Anastasia summarise this ongoing, emotionally charged, need to remain mobile and continue their international contacts:

After that experience, of opening many things, the experience of becoming a world citizen, it is very difficult to stop, do you understand? (Anastasia)

And I'm missing academic atmosphere there, because in Yerevan at home I have a group of friends with whom I can discuss things on the level which I think is appropriate. But I would like to have more diverse experience. Not from the same background, we have problems, turns out we have more or less not very much diverse world views. Based on this I can doubt how far reaching our conclusions can be, how fruitful our discussion, our discourse can be, while when you're in international diverse experience, group, and quality group, there you get by far more insight, by far more ideas, that's what [the international university in Europe] taught me, that's what [the university] taught me. I think I need this. (Davit)

The effect of the experiences of internationalisation is the formation of a new sense of self based on the discourse of 'internationalisation as individualization'. One strong example of this is offered by Julius who at one point summarises his current perception of himself as no longer completely Georgian or as somewhat displaced in his internationalised self. Experiences of internationalization at an American university, followed by ongoing

‘internationalization at home’ as a result of ten years spent working for an international organization are constructed as making him a non-traditional Georgian person:

Everything together I would say because when I was at the [international organisation] I was travelling so much, I was sleeping only in Georgia and every day I was in an international environment, so for me I was really like outside of the country so I adopted this Western understanding of attitudes and behaviours and all these things and I just didn’t realise it, but some other people they realised it, that I am not a typical Georgian sometimes they say... Yes, for instance I don’t drink a lot the wine like Georgians do, or some of them think that I am reserved a little bit, I don’t know how is it true or not (Julius).

In these narratives we can indeed see a redirection of life story from one of traditional patterns of life progression towards the formation of a new cosmopolitan identity and a desire for varied international experiences, in particular, in relation to educational opportunities and academic prospects. In many ways, these academics have indeed entered a new reality, partly as an outcome of transition and of the internationalization process, a reality where their professional and personal identities will be structured by the principle of strategic choices and different representations of self based on the needs of new contexts or locations.

This change is also directly reported by Tamar, whose narrative presents a story of increasing differentiation of identities, a construction of a strategic and multi-faceted set of her skills and occupations based on the economic needs (and achieved also partly through internationalization):

Yeah, and to go back to that I have several CV’s, I have CV as an interpreter because I would interpret a lot, or a CV as a translator, then I had a CV as an NGO representative because I had many projects and I was doing this

NGO stuff, so I had kind of three types of CV. And it's probably the same now, when I apply to some of the places I dig up some old CVs and look at them. Or CV as a trainer because I would do trainings for NGOs or CV as a gender [studies] representative, so different types of thing. (Tamar)

The narratives clearly show that the experiences of internationalisation among academics in the context of transition were constructed as part of their individualisation story, which has set an alternative life course for them, and has provided them with different set of expectations, career orientations and desires then they would have had if they had not pursued these experiences. The components of the resulting new internationalised academic identity will be reported in much greater detail in the next chapter.

5.4 The alternative narrative of the unproblematic past in family lives.

However, it has to be pointed out that in many of the life stories, the logic of individualisation was not the only available structuring principle of the life progression. Quite to the contrary, there were many traces of an understanding of the life course as following a pre-established pattern and fitting into a stable social structure. This was particularly visible in relation to the perception of family as the main structure in individual lives, and of family members as important co-constructors of educational decisions. In this way, the higher education story is a story of following in the typical life course and making expected, or 'normal' choices for these academics as members of a specific class or social stratum. This is not a story of individualisation any more, but rather a story of conforming to what is understood as an expectation of a normal educational achievement and career progression.

This aspect of career choice as a family expectation rather than an individualistic achievement is shared by several of the interviewees (seven) who in various ways revealed or assumed that they were expected to go to higher education by their family members and their peers. There were as many as five interviewees who mentioned their family background being academic, and further two mentioned it as non-academic but highly literate or in some ways supportive and approving of (or actively helping to obtain) an academic occupation. This aspect of family tradition is even stronger in cases where the expectation was to receive a doctoral level degree, usually in cases of a family consisting of academics. This context is shared by Katerina, a Russian criminologist and Tamar a Georgian psychologist:

Both of my parents are academics. My grandmother and grandfather, they were academics, so it was, since the kindergarten I knew I would be doing my PhD, it was like you know a program minimum to do a PhD.
(Katerina)

In the community I was belonging to it was normal to become an academic because everyone around me, more or less were academics. My parents, my grandparents, my uncles, my aunts, I don't know, almost everybody. Almost everybody had higher education, and also everybody would work in more or less academic work. (...) Again, it was no question for me, I would deliberately go to the PhD, I would want to do that, although I never thought in terms of career [...] we didn't think in terms of career then, because it was a specific climate in which you were within a community so you would be the same, maybe a researcher, or a university professor, with this moderate salary but never thought in these terms, in terms of economics or so. (Tamar)

These aspects of academic development clearly correspond more to the preservation of traditional patterns of being and also represent a respectable and available route towards relative economic stability and relatively high social status that is a continuation of the social reproduction patterns, rather than a story of individual differentiation. Similarly, the notion of

family life and of gendered family roles, when it is explicitly discussed, is considered rather in terms of fulfilment of a normal, traditional and the unquestioned life patterns. For example, marriage is also often with another academic (in four cases) or with a person who has a high level of education (this is made explicit in four more cases). This is often self-constructed as a unique situation, presenting the academic's life as more unique rather than traditional, but it corresponds well to the principle of maintaining the social status of the educated class.

This alternative way of structuring the life story as a matter of family expectations, rather than as an individualistic experience, is also present in some of the discussions of disciplinary specialisation (at the point of access to higher education). Tamar's story gives direct voice to the interaction of patterns of reproduction of family expectations and possible individual decisions in terms of career (subject) choice:

My father wanted me to become a chemist, I don't know why, maybe because he had a lot of chemist friends. But then at a certain point in time I decided I wanted to become a psychologist, and that was actually a strange thing because we were never taught psychology at schools, so it was kind of unusual. It was almost the last year of high school I decided that but it was my decision because they did not have this idea, and so it was my decision. And again that was a kind of different thing because in many cases parents would decide instead of their children to which higher education institution they would go. (Tamar)

In this aspect again, the narrative of individualisation is not completely appropriate. The personal life story is only partially an individualised story, and some aspects of individualisation are not materially or culturally possible, much like in the case of research on Western women academics of two generations undertaken by Skelton (2005). The narratives on family life certainly modify the individualisation life story in significant ways.

5.5 The narrative of internationalisation as a ‘chance’.

The interviewees also constructed an alternative narrative on internationalisation that could be labelled as ‘accidental individualisation’. As the academics interviewed went through their scholarly socialization processes in their home country, in many cases possibilities for internationalisation seemed to them to have appeared suddenly and unexpectedly with the possibilities of foreign funding, international cooperation and opening of borders. Most of the interviewees did not claim that their decision to seek their first experience of internationalization was a conscious life strategy. Internationalisation is experienced at first, as a series of chance events, unforeseen opportunities that simply happened to present themselves and which the interviewees were able to stumble into without any clear conception of how these might be significant. Their constructions of the self engaging in internationalization for the first time were based on external structures of social change and transformation understood as unexpected enabling opportunities:

So, in this particular moment I found myself in a very interesting, in a very helpful situation, because I started my PhD. (...) and at the same time many interesting opportunities opened, to go abroad, to search archives, to do research. (Anastasia)

In fact, the narrative of chance is a common causal explanation for progression in higher education as the example of Anton illustrates:

I had a chance for all this money, I had a chance, all this occupation was by chance, only [exception was] after this exam maybe the professor said, OK you should come to my place [and join the institute].

But, just because my father, my parents are not in the sciences or whatever, it was by chance, I applied by chance, to this job in this centre [first research job], I applied by chance, for this PHD position, so everything was by chance. (Anton)

In the same vein, Anton's opportunity to apply for a research position in Germany, his first and only significant long term international experience, is linked to a 'chance' acquaintance at his first foreign conference with a helpful Hungarian academic:

[...] and at certain point a director of institute of demography here [Hungary] approached me and said, and he said that they are looking for a social scientist in Bulgaria, there is a project, why don't you simply apply, its good scholarship and you get good training in Germany, this was at [German research] institute an this Hungarian colleague told me about this during this conference and that there is such a position open and they cannot find someone. There were several applications but the colleagues at [the institute] did not feel they were qualified enough. (Anton)

These opportunities presented as 'chance' were more often than not the result of the actions of specific individuals who took an active role in advising on aspects of the academic's career progression. In Anastasia's case this is clearly visible in her account of gaining a job at the university, and then, later in her account of her decision to switch her attention from teaching towards research and further internationalization:

I think that many things happened in my life by chance, owing to people whom I met. (...) I graduated in 1991, and after that, after working in the school, I was invited to my department by my teacher, my university teacher who used to be my supervisor, during my diploma project to work in the department as an assistant. (Anastasia)

He looked at me and my friend who was in the same position as me, we were both assistants, and he looked at us and said ‘What are you doing here at the department? Are you going to be the slaves of all these situations and these professors, established professors, are you willing to spend all your life sitting here and teaching these wretched courses? You should do your research, you should do your PhD, to obtain some more respected position here... And he literally forced us to start, to engage into the PhD research and he simply was a kind of, a person who did not teach a lot at this particular department and he was a kind of distracted [distanced], he looked at this whole situation from outside... (Anastasia)

This overall narrative of chance is perhaps the most often used explanatory principle for the narratives of individualisation, in terms of explaining causality of events in a (changing) academic profession that was characterized by lack of transparency on the one hand, and fairly traditional patterns of career progression, on the other. What appeared as chance events to the academics concerned, or rather what was self-constructed as ‘chance’ were either the interventions of others (usually through the exercise of the ‘normal’ patronage system responsible for the many of academic careers in the post-soviet space) or effects of their own decisions but not at that time, or even at the time of the interview, understood as individualized, deliberate ‘life choices’. This meta-narrative is connected to the way the academic profession and life in general would have unfolded earlier, before the neo-liberal principles of competition, and deliberate seeking of external opportunities for self-advancement constructed as an individualized process. It is the counter-narrative to narrative of the individualised academic development.

5.6 The narratives of difficulties of internationalisation.

Having sketched out some of the contrasting or contradictory characteristics of the life story of internationalisation as individualisation of the self, I will now account for some of the more negative or challenging aspects of the personal experiences of internationalisation

Among all interviewees, internationalisation was experienced as formative and extremely useful activity but it does not mean it was an unproblematic experience in all cases. It was often also challenging on personal, emotional or even physical levels and these challenges are often experienced as defining aspects of the individualised life story. This is particularly the case with internationalisation experienced during the earlier years of transition among older interviewees, who were stepping into another reality for the first time. In Sergei's case, the experience of living in the US as a doctoral student was challenging in many ways, as it has produced a whole array of financial and health related difficulties:

As for the overall life it was extremely hard because I was limited in my, it's very personal experience and I am not blaming anybody but it was very hard because I for instance, I have never been in any capitalist country, OK? I came from the Soviet Union, I run into huge trouble with my dental problems for instance and it cost lots of money so I was facing very tough choices, to sell my apartment in Moscow, and everything was changing in Russia, in those days. I did not realise that, you know, the apartments would cost like a hundred times more then, when I sold it in Russia. (Sergei)

In this particular case, being a full time student made the material conditions difficult since it prevented the possibility of legal employment beyond a limited part-time activity at the university:

But I did not know what to do because I was not allowed to work extra time because of my visa, my visa allowed me to work only the way I was allowed to earn money was to work fifty percent of time as a teaching assistant. And then as an instructor and besides a small salary they gave me a tuition waver so I did not have to pay for education, so the overall experience was very hard. (Sergei 4)

Further difficulties were experienced as a result of the necessity of returning to Russia and the difficulty of continuing to secure a student visa:

And unfortunately besides the fact that it takes relatively long time to get the degree because you know how it works, my pace was compromised by the fact that I had to return to Russia and, for many years, and I was not allowed to get back, because I was not an immigrant, I was on student visa, each time I had to go to the consulate [to renew the visa] and I made a huge mistake, I was offered a green card and I declined, and I was stranded in Russia. I corresponded with my advisor but you know when you don't work face to face then it slows down. (Sergei)

This was not the only case of distinctly challenging and negative aspects of the internationalisation experience. An even more emotionally difficult experience was recalled by Tamar during her first, not formally organised trip to UK, in which she felt she was being treated as a second rate person:

The people would smile to you and would be very nice on the surface, but under the surface they would regard you as something of a second sort or something. And many people would tell me, especially if you were not British, you were treated like a kind of second sort, and back then I had some other things. (Tamar)

In fact Tamar's first trip (on an open invitation from a researcher who lived in Cambridge) resulted in her being informally employed as an au pair in her host family, in exchange for their hospitality. This was something that she was not expecting to have to do when she accepted the invitation to go to the UK, she found it very hard work and insulting as well as resulting in huge disillusionment with the West and with the internationalisation possibilities:

And it was very heavy for me. And because of that when I came back I did not want to go abroad for a long period of time, for many, many years, because I had this, I think it was trauma, you could say this. It was very heavy to me. And then we did not have connection, like there were not Internet at that time.

On top of that, I had a very idealistic understanding of the Western world, I thought that people would be very noble, very honest, sophisticated, I don't know all these good things, you now. And that was a huge disillusionment for me as well. After that, so that was 97, I came back, it was only six months but it was more than enough for me. (Tamar)

One of the interviewees was a young divorced mother when she decided to take up an opportunity of a teaching semester in Germany. She experienced numerous difficulties finding appropriate childcare facilities when teaching:

And I took my child and went to [German city]. It was not a very easy time, if I can say so, because if it were not with a child, it would have been more easy but it was not, because there were so many difficulties with a little child when I went there, absolutely alone in a foreign country, and no one could help you.

(...) And sometimes I had to take her with myself to the university and she spoilt a bit the picture because she just never let me go, there was nobody there who could speak to her in Russian, that's why she called everyone there a fool, [laughs] because they could not understand her speaking. (Amelia)

Returning home had its own difficulties in relation to family life. For many, teaching and administration took over as the main tasks, for some combined with family obligations. For most of the academics their own job and their private life began to make more and more demands on their time after returning from their trips abroad and they became more concerned with maintaining their overall life balance rather than just with their international academic development. On the other hand, others experienced that private life was being deliberately pushed aside. This was especially the case with women who considered having children almost impossible to combine with academic, and particularly the international, dimension of their life. Anastasia had a particularly strong negative feeling of the ending of international opportunities as soon as her daughter was born:

It was in seven years ago, in 2001. And you see I felt, I was very happy having a daughter and so on, but when I was walking with her, in this baby road, and I looked at the sky, I remember my thoughts, I looked at the sky and I thought 'well, I am not going to go there' meaning that I am not going to go to this world, this world of conferences, meetings, partnership in the academic sense, because now I have another life, 'it's a pity, but it's life, OK, I am here, and I will be stuck in my university and my department, I will teach, and so on and I will be bringing up my daughter'".[...] I don't know, I felt that something stopped. Because I am not free. Before, even when I had my husband, it did not prevent me from doing my research, from travelling around the world, and, but 'now I have a baby, this means that I should be at home and I should bring up my daughter and I shouldn't go for my research trips. My research trips, they were quite long, for several months or even a year, and I could not afford it any more, that, I, I realised that this part of my life just ended. It was over. That was my feeling.

(Anastasia)

One female academic considered gender as irrelevant to her status as an academic, however she saw it as a 'natural' barrier to further internationalisation in relation to family obligations, once she has children:

But I do not think it's a problem being a female in academia, the new problem comes in relation to family and kids, as I'm at the certain age already, and haven't had children so far, so I'm just thinking, if I want to go for a post-doc, or a teaching fellowship just for one semester abroad, how will I do that if I have a small kid? It's not possible, if you're a man, you're more flexible in that respect. So it's not about how the others [male colleagues] perceive you in academia, but a natural sort of restriction on how you feel in relation to your family. (Milena)

Having children is definitely a shared concern and a strong barrier to further internationalisation for the women academics interviewed, whilst having an equally internationalised partner, particularly an academic one, was considered a facilitating factor by several interviewees:

In this sense we have no problem, so we are used to, because my husband also studied abroad and went abroad, goes abroad for longer periods of time so we are used to that someone is missing. But for us it's OK we are accustomed. Probably I think that for some of my colleagues at the department it is a problem, especially if they have kids and then they have no time, they have to lecture. (Daria)

Clearly my sample of female academics is very small and the historical context of transition was also very specific and would require much further research regarding the gendered aspects of internationalisation. But there clearly appeared many gendered aspects in the experience of internationalisation as well as gendered aspects of overall academic life.

Interestingly, among a few women academics there was an mis-identification of gendered discrimination as not really a problem at all in the professional sphere (only two identified gender as a problem in explicit terms) and gendered discrimination on the basis of family situation (having children) was often not questioned. It was simply understood as a changed situation in one's life course that imposed its own limitations and had to be dealt with.

5.7 Summary of findings on the construction of international experiences as individualised lives.

My aim in this chapter was to point to what I see as the significant main common characteristics of these specific cases of internationalisation as a building block of a (partly) individualised life story. These cases show internationalisation as a profoundly important and life changing experience, even though it was also sometimes experienced as a difficult situation. Internationalisation is one of the key aspects of the life narrative that can be, and often is, used to build an individualized life story. Internationalisation experiences are a vital part of this shift in identity building as they allow for the adoption of different and new ways of being. Therefore, internationalisation can be read through the concept of individualisation, particularly in the specific enabling context of regime change and social transformation that made these particular experiences possible.

Given all the claims about the nature of post-industrial and even post-transformation societies as an arena for a newer and more self-reflexive, individualistic identity construction, the concrete process of individualization present is a potentially important way of understanding

the narratives of internationalised academics. The concept is fitting to the study of academic lives under transformation and internationalization since the interviewees themselves are making sense of their lives in this way.

However, although narratives of individualization (including differentiation from the majority, individual-decision making, the use of new opportunities of social transformation) can clearly be shown in the identity construction of these academics, not all aspects of the narrative are constructed as individualization. Clearly aspects of the social structure remained an important determinant of their lives. There was explicit or implicit reporting of social reproduction of roles (such as class, family, gender, profession) in these interviews which were not always being experienced as individualised lives. Alongside the repertoire of individualisation, there is also the repertoire of 'tradition', in particular in relation to these aspects of the life narratives such as the class and parental expectation to go to university. Overall, the internationalised personal identity emerges as coherent but not devoid of difficult lessons and significant complications. It can also be pointed out that in this specific sample internationalisation did not sit comfortably with the requirements of family life, particularly for the female academics, although this problem was usually not clearly identified in terms of gender inequality.

Finally, internationalisation itself can simultaneously be experienced as conscious, individual choice of making use of new opportunities and as blind 'chance', a fortuitous happening that the individual is thrown into - suggesting that individualisation is not always constructed as a product of deliberate exercise in self-reflexivity. The next chapter continues the exploration of

the narratives in relation to the concrete experiences of internationalisation as an aspect of the creation of academic identity.

Chapter 6: Internationalisation and the construction of hybrid academic identity.

This chapter aims to provide a more elaborate answer to the first research question, that is, how internationalisation is becoming embedded in academic identities in transition. My analytical preoccupation will shift from overall life-story to the professional story in order to classify and explore how internationalisation experiences have been used in the process of constructing academic identity. Further to that, I focus on the work of maintaining an internationalised academic profile and the effects of such a profile for the localised academic life. This analysis is a synthesis of the findings, looking to uncover key similarities and differences in the process of internationalisation and the resulting identity construction.

6.1 Narratives related to the integration of an internationalised academic identity.

6.1.1 The narrative of continued internationalisation as identity building.

In the case of most of the interviewees, their first internationalisation experience led them to seek out further productive opportunities, which allowed them to accumulate new degrees, form whole new disciplinary orientations, or specific methodological approaches within a discipline. They perceived these experiences as valuable and needed to help them overcome the perceived lack in their previous training, particularly during pre-transition and early transition years.

In some cases, the subsequent experiences were simply a direct continuation of the first, such as moving from an MA level degree at a Western university to a PhD, or doing a second MA at another university. In Lukas's case the second degree undertaken was an intensified one-year undergraduate program, clearly conceived as a missing additional qualification for his doctoral research progression:

And after Budapest, the Masters I went to Belgium for a year, to study philosophy, for a BA because, after my MA I made a BA in Philosophy in [Belgian university]. Because since, I was working on medieval philosophy [the supervisor] told me that I needed background in philosophy and I agreed. ... (...) That is why [Belgian university] provided me with this background. To know what is the history of philosophy, logics, ethics, epistemology, all these disciplines which are necessary. Otherwise if you do only medieval philosophy without that background its like you are blind. (Lukas)

In other cases, it entailed applying for other programs or short professional development opportunities in a different setting and in some cases it led to a whole series of international experiences. This is how Tamar describes this process:

I got and I can say about myself, before these two huge goings [trips] out to [British university] and to [American university], I went to a German university for a month, we had some special scholarship, together with one colleague of mine, then I went to British universities, we had another project for two or three times, and then I went to conferences and so on. (Tamar)

The process of internationalisation as a career development strategy was a cumulative one, usually pursued with ever greater self-awareness of its importance and more careful search for

opportunities as the skills of participation in the international programs increased. For some this meant simply continuing to seek further, usually shorter-term, research fellowships, library stays or professional development programs, for others this led them to become more active in participating in international conferences, or to develop a partnership between a program they work for and a foreign institution. In some cases they were most interested in presenting their work to their international network of colleagues they had gained while abroad. The individual strategies varied, but the common thread was that internationalisation became a key building block in the creation and maintenance of academic identity.

6.1.2 The narratives of internationalisation as a career requirement.

Other interviewees, specially those who were socialized into the profession during the later transition period often felt the rising *expectation* that as academics they can and should travel abroad and they attempted to use these opportunities at various stages of their education or professional life in order to strategically add new qualities to their skill set or to overcome the perceived limitations of their home educational system or a particular institution. These academics strived to combine their private life and their considerable teaching loads with occasional foreign trips. The typical strategies of conference invitation and short library scholarships for ongoing though short term visits abroad are described by Daria:

And actually, it is very important for me to get from time to time some scholarship, for example for one month, or two months to go somewhere and read. Because after being here for half a year or a year I really feel, because [we] have quite a limited, in sense of getting access to articles, or books, but it is not enough. And in big universities they collect almost everything that is published in a field. So for me it is very important to keep up

my shape, to go there and have a possibility to just to read some new books and to realise what is happening within sociology. And for this region this is the biggest problem so far, we are still, not so.., not part of this research which is happening in Western countries.

(...) and I was thinking of applying somewhere else again, maybe next summer to go to Vienna for at least ten days or something. (Daria)

This desire for continued internationalisation and seeking of additional opportunities for short term trips shows already how internationalised academic identity had become the *dominant* construction of the academic self for many of the interviewees – they wished to have access to the full range of literature and resources similar to their colleagues in Western institutions (which are perceived as leading in research) and to maintain academic and intellectual links they have formed which they now felt were integral to their identity as a researcher or professional. There is a shift in the narratives from the role of Western universities as occasional ‘donors’ of additional training and missing resources, to their conceptualisation as ‘centres of excellence’ in research, and centres of the individual identity maintenance of academics.

The new requirements for substantial internationalization are structured around the language of research excellence and research productivity with models provided mainly by English-speaking academics and their university systems:

I should do something especially when I come here, now at the [international program] meeting, I see the library resources, how advanced these professors are here in comparison with me, because I see the difference, I feel that I should do something with it. Maybe I should dare to go outside of Georgia for a couple of years for a program. Post-doctoral program or something. And one of my intentions is to publish this Georgian philosopher

about whom I wrote my thesis, I ought to translate him into English and make him available to larger public. And if I get some funding for it I will do it. So I am thinking about it, to do something with my life in a sense, not to get stagnated. (Lukas)

Such requirements of course may lead to a loss of sense of status in the new international academic circle which is now conceived as an important international point of reference.

For example, Jakub and Tamar consider themselves not internationalized as much as some of their younger colleagues, and for them that means that they are potentially slower in gaining the same position as their younger colleagues:

Political scientists of my age and older have a comparable background because they started as someone else and later became political scientists. Political scientists of the new generation studied political science from the very beginning and then got additional education somewhere abroad and these are the hope of this discipline in Georgia, it's not that we are less important but I still think that people who studied that from the very beginning and then plus got some foreign training will be more advanced when they reach my age, that's for sure. (Jakub)

And there, let's say I fully grasped the idea of how the research is done in Western countries and I also realised, because there was another colleague there from another university in Georgia who is six years younger than me, and I realised that this is exactly the six years that I mostly lost, although I can say I had this teaching and this kind of things, they helped me to stay in normal shape, but she, in this period of time, she would go to Moscow, she would study, she would go somewhere else she would study and so on. Now, looking back I think I was even discussing this with somebody else, it would be better for me if those years I went to Britain or somewhere and do my Master's degree or even a PhD, of course I would get much more. (Tamar)

This may even lead to the perception that a fully fledged professional in a senior academic leadership position deliberates on applying to a Western PhD program at a late stage in his academic life.

But to say frankly, I don't know what I will do but I have now several opportunities, I might, I am not sure, I am still thinking, OK, I have this doctorate from Georgian university but I think at the end maybe I will apply, I have some proposal for [a] university in Italy, and if family allows me maybe I will do the PhD again but in Western university. [...], because even though I defended it I don't feel I, because there is a huge competition now in Georgia, a lot of people will come or they are already here, with PhDs from Western universities for example from Georgetown, Harvard or something. (Julius)

Sergei's deliberations on his CV in comparison to what the best academics in his field do, also illustrates the discourse of the ever increasing global academic competition in which he feels he ought to strive to find his place:

For instance, I will give an example, it's a little bit you know, higher level, like people who have credentials, in Russia credentials count too but international names in demography, they move from Max Planck Institute to Yale, I mean they are in demand throughout the world. (Sergei)

This new individualized identity is based on availability and accessibility of some structural opportunities for further international collaboration or training and on a process of conscious deliberation over the value of these future professional choices. This ongoing discursive deliberation about the personal value of specific degrees of internationalisation leads to a desire to lead a more explicitly internationalised academic life, either at home or abroad.

For example Sofia, talks of her intention to gain acceptance to the best department of sociology in her specialized field in the US (after she finishes the Russian doctoral dissertation) as a possibility:

I want to study at a university which specialises in economic sociology and at the moment my focus in urban sociology and city planning and [US university] is the best university in this field. (...) I would like to continue my career in academic sphere, now I know for sure that I have to go to [US city] and get this degree there, and I would like to teach after that, maybe in Russia and maybe abroad. I do not plan to stay in the United States, I will come back to Russia and if the situation there will be too bad, I will go abroad somewhere, I don't know Australia, New Zealand, any English speaking country. (Sofia)

These narratives suggest that there are hidden costs of internationalisation for the academic identity, that the level of internationalisation matters when located in a changing university context, and that even substantial internationalisation may not be enough. Internationalisation links to an increasing perception of academic work as *globalised* work, which may only be available for the international *elite* (mainly consisting of academics from Western countries or with substantial Western education) and it links with the appearance of neo-liberal discourse of competition for limited academic work places and for prestigious publication venues that transform academic life into a marketable commodity.

The process of individualization, that is a discourse of deliberate, strategic and reflective choice-making and identity building in a changing context, takes over in parts of these academics' narratives, in particular when they talk of future decisions. The *opportunities*

become constructed as *requirements* for professional development based on a new type of individualized and Westernised professional identity.

6.1.3 The narratives of re-integration into local academic life.

The academics interviewed all found their way back to an institution in their country of origin in various ways, therefore the story of ongoing internationalisation as differentiation or academic individualisation is also partly a story of normalisation in terms of the academic career progression in the more local university context.

If the internationalisation phase of academic life was a short term program or a series of programs for interviewees already enrolled in a doctoral program at home, they normally remained in their home institution as a teaching assistant and eventually were offered a faculty position.

Others gained employment by invitation from a senior professor from their undergraduate university after their year away for an MA or even after a doctoral degree. This avenue of returning to the home university context is exemplified by Milena and Lukas.

I don't know it's something untypical, actually after I graduated I graduated initially from the department where now I teach. So basically I'm like a second daughter generation of graduates and coming back to the department, and some of my fellow junior colleagues are in the same situation, so we studied there and now we come back as teachers which is good because there is certain continuity. (Milena)

When I returned from Budapest from my PhD studies I went immediately to my Alma Mater, to [main state university] the older one, at that time there was no [new state] university, and I started to teach Byzantine studies, because Byzantine studies was least represented in our school. (Lukas)

Importantly, for several academics, their significant period of internationalisation resulted in disappointment with the original university program or department they had left, and thus it made returning not a desirable option. This led them to look for alternative departments as possibilities for their employment, as Davit and Daria (referring to the internationalisation experience of her academic husband) point out:

(...) and afterwards another frustration of course to come back home to see how they perceive you. The same institution and there you feel it became double difficult to continue your research, to do something. (Davit)

And another thing it is very difficult to come back, because if you gradually go from one level to the next and you are part of the system then it is much easier, if you go abroad and come back you are not within this system anymore and you really have to prove that this system needs you. For example my husband had a very difficult experience in his chair [department], and all his innovations, they were commented “oh you came from the West and you had this Western theories or experiences to introduce here and its bullshit” or something like that. And he decided that it is not possible to reform the history department so he preferred to go to the research institute and to be involved in research and not to be involved in teaching. (Daria)

Whilst usually constructed as beneficial for the individual's academic development, this profound experience of internationalisation, may be producing difficulties if the local context is not itself reforming towards acceptance of internationalized faculty and their newer practices. This is also visible in Robert's account of returning to his home university after his MA abroad and to find out that the university and the doctoral program he was enrolled in had

nothing to offer for him, even to the extent that he actually gave up defending his dissertation, realising that the work produced would have been below his own expectations of what high quality research should achieve, even if it could have passed the defence examination:

I did not have a good tutor [at doctoral program at home] or good instructor actually to lead me in this direction so what I have done, basically I have done it myself and it was not as good as it should be so when I went to the States I read many important things and consulted with many good anthropologists and then I realised that actually what I have done is more like an MA thesis not like kandidatskaya level but when I returned home my mentor told me, it does not matter, you have to defend it and that's it. And it was like a contradiction, whether should I just overcome myself and say OK, let's defend it, it does not matter what quality it is because I could easily defend. Because they say, in the academia you are not defending, we defend you, on the matter of this kandidatskaya. But then I decided I don't want to play in this, because while you do this then you have to continue. I decided, I stopped this subject, if I am not professional in it, then I will just quit, and I turned more to visual studies, then it's not the traditional art history but I tried notions and everything related to visuality. (Robert)

In these cases, it is clear that the internationalised faculty were received as alien to the local academic standards and practices, as too eager to westernise their departments or introduce 'innovations', and they could quite easily be put in their place since their career status was that of a junior or very inexperienced academic. We can witness in these and similar narratives an emergence of a conflict of values over what is desirable in academic aspirations and practices, in which internationalised faculty could be perceived as irritants in the established academic system. In the absence of significant policy and power shifts in the local institutional context, the internationalised academic lives could become wasted academic lives. At the same time, the appearance of these conflicts shows the very beginning of the

social change, in which the post-soviet university systems are slowly being exposed to Western values. In fact, the internationalised faculty are the first advocates of these values in the local academic sphere.

The stories of integration of an internationalised academic identity are stories of discovering of new and promising career opportunities but also of risking some established opportunities, and the final career destinations and career satisfaction levels are varied. The basic institutional content of some of these conflicts around higher education values and their professional significance for the interviewees will be discussed further in the last empirical chapter of the thesis.

6.2 The different degrees of internationalization story and its effects on the self.

Having discussed some of the key aspects of internationalisation in the story of academic development, I will now discuss how individual experiences of internationalisation led to different constructions of hybrid academic identities. The hybridity refers to different ways in which the national and the international aspects of the academic self were woven together to produce a coherent story of the academic self.

Overall, three broad levels of internationalization have been found in the narratives: profound internationalization, significant internationalization and partial internationalization of the academic self. These could be understood as categories of the life story or versions of the internationalisation story.

6.2.1 Narratives of profound internationalization.

These narratives were usually generated by academics who had several significant long term periods of residence in a foreign educational system, usually for an advanced academic degree, in particular for a doctorate, or undertaken as a part of their doctoral education at key stages of research training. The examples here were in particular the narratives of Artur, Sergei, Emil, Lukas, but constructions close to profound internationalization are also present in some of the other narratives to a smaller extent. The long term or in-depth experience of internationalization associated with doctoral education seems to be resulting in a new, ‘foreign’ academic identity narrative, with new academic values and practices which are then constructed as coexisting or contrasting with those attributed to the local context. We can understand this experience of internationalisation as producing a multiple or foreign academic identity.

It is Artur’s account which uses the discourse of hybridity most explicitly in assessing his academic self, thus providing a self-reflective categorization of his experience:

As I mentioned, the change of place, or the change of Russian academia, American academia, French academia, they are all very different. (...) Oh, they mattered enormously, each one in a way framed me, some things I liked, some I didn’t, but inevitably, if you study in an institution, you accept some of this culture or some of these standards just to start with. ...One can see my life, that I am influenced by all the three, I am a hybrid. (Artur)

Artur understands himself as a direct product of internationalisation and as a hybrid. He no longer considers himself just as a Russian academic who had international experiences, but as a Russian academic who is simultaneously French and an American academic. Indication of such an identity is given by Artur in more detail in relation to his writing style in research:

Well, for example, I am now preparing this dissertation of mine as a book and I am thinking about it all the time, its kind of strange, on the one hand, there is a lot of quite thick philosophy and jargon which is characteristic of French philosophy, and at the same time, there is a lot of appeal to common sense, attempts to give explanations, some conversational insertions or conversational style, jokes, which are more characteristic of the American style. I can see that I was writing these at maybe different times but I was also, I had these two standards in my mind if I can say so. And of course something comes from Russian culture, less maybe. ... Oh, I am Russian but what I am doing is more American, as an academic. (Artur)

This level of internationalisation is often self-consciously constructed in the narratives as a unique asset for the academic's career prospects; they are hopeful that in their changing contexts, this experience may be sought after and highly rewarded. Sergei's narrative gives a clear expression to this hope:

I am not there of course but I mean in some subtle way I am still close to that you know [international] rank, because you know people look at my CV, right, they can see, the guy has a double affiliation, right, first hand knowledge of Russia plus hopefully and American degree plus conferences in Europe, plus rank, so in that sense I mean the person belongs to the word wide community. (Sergei)

But I am not trying to sound immodest, I am trying to stay level of course, but I am saying in that way it was a breakthrough, a milestone, because it opened the doors, it opened the doors. And it works both ways, like here in Russia I teach better because I got this experience in the US, like participating in grants for Russia, yes they look at my [CV], like I hope in Europe they look at my international credentials, am I right?

So that is my guess, so I mean that kind of, that's why I think it's a breakthrough, this American experience though it is not finished yet. (Sergei)

Overall, the experience of profound internationalisation is usually constructed as something that amounts to a completely new sense of the professional 'self', one that is coherent and in general satisfying the individual's ambitions. Many of the constructions of this hybrid identity are still conceived as an ongoing or unfinished product, whether or not a foreign degree is already completed.

The profound internationalisation necessitates or results in particular changes in the academic's orientation to what constitutes a significant community of peers, in terms of research and publications in particular, and this imagined or real community of peers is located beyond the national disciplinary grouping. This presence of the international orientation in publishing was narrated by Igor, Artur, and Sergei.

The framing of experience as cases of profound internationalisation is often linked to strongly reformist agenda in relation to one's educational system, often based on the perception of oneself as a new, positive model for how the professional should act and how the educational system should be changing (this orientation will be explored further in chapter 8). On the other hand, the academics who feel they are profoundly internationalised remain to some extent alien to their own educational system. For example, they are a group for whom the option of leaving again and working internationally seems still open, at least for a period of time at the beginning of their career. In fact Sergei, who only after several years of being back

in Russia decided to settle for working at a local university, is still uncertain about what options may be open to him and for how long:

I am still thinking about the possibility of a career in the United states and to publish in a peer reviewed journal in US which is a good thing for career in US, and that's the whole issue of choosing the country and there are many pros and cons, and at my age I need to think of doing just whatever works, and after all also to do it in Russia because first of all it is an activity and second of all my position in the US is not guaranteed so I need somehow to establish whatever is possible in Russia (Sergei)

On the other hand, returning may result in a sense of loss or separation from the international context which has by now become the standard for judging one's achievement. This is also particularly well exemplified by Lukas:

I am kind of now in a comfortable situation but this comfortable situation is not a good situation is the sense of my development. I feel somehow stagnated. I give more then I receive in the sense of intellectual development. Of course I prepare myself for courses and I try that my classes be engaging and interesting but it is not the same as to sit for a long time in the library, to make in depth research, for this I have not time. And this frightens me and I want to do something with it. (Lukas)

In summary, these types of narratives usually integrate the story of the international experience to such an extend that it creates a whole new sense of identity which exists parallel to or even replaces aspects of the local educational orientation. In other words, we are dealing with the creation of a strongly, and usually self-consciously, hybrid identity, that is so important to the individual that some local requirements, values and ways of being can become of secondary importance. Many of these academics with advanced level postgraduate

training, create a new, Westernised, academic identity in the discipline which they wish to practice in the local context. The profoundly internationalised academics consider themselves ‘global citizens’ in the academic profession, or aspire to such position and they often see themselves as entrepreneurial and independent. The specific elements of this orientation will be further analysed in the following chapter.

6.2.2 Narratives of significant internationalization.

The second type of narrative found was less categorical in the sense of the new international identity ‘replacing’ the national or original one. Instead, it rather formed a significant contribution to the formation of the professional self. The resulting identity is therefore even more strongly hybrid, a combination or patchwork of the ‘native’ self and the new international identity. The combination of skills thus developed is usually perceived as completely meaningful and coherent. But there is also a stronger sense of belonging predominantly within the local/national academic community which is being considered as most relevant for one’s career.

These accounts of internationalisation in academic identity were usually generated by academics with significant experiences abroad, either a combination of several longer term research or study trips or usually an MA level degree undertaken abroad, but in most cases, followed by a doctoral study in the home system, sometimes at the same original institution as the first undergraduate degree.

For example, for Amelia, her local educational setting is of primary importance and experiences abroad are important but secondary. This is clear when she recalls her first research opportunity in the UK, as perhaps the only such opportunity to visit a university abroad and gather materials for her MA thesis:

I thought wow, maybe it is the only opportunity if I am going to write a diploma about the history of Britain and I was already interested in the history of Britain, because it was language and history, both perspectives united for me. And I thought that maybe it could be the only opportunity because I didn't know exactly, so that is why I decided to participate. But it was a sort of competition, and I was selected among four students to go to Great Britain, to go to [UK city], and to prepare for the diploma paper. So, that was it and that was in 1993 and in 1994 so we went to [a UK] university. I found it fascinating, it was a very wonderful experience, you know it was my first trip abroad, and I found very many interesting things, sources, literature, on the person about whom I was writing my diploma. (Amelia)

Anastasia recalls several research opportunities in the UK and a semester of doctoral support (including coursework) at and international university in Europe as both of primary importance for her research skills and her overall confidence in the discipline (and her erudition in terms of relevant new readings):

It was a definite opportunity for a PhD student to go to England or to Germany, depending on their preferences, and to stay for a month or more to do your own research, not teaching, not lecturing, just meeting experts whom you are interested to meet and do your research in the libraries and archives and something like this. And it was very helpful. (Anastasia)

For Milena, her two years at the international university contributed to her subsequent decision to choose teaching and a permanent academic job over part-time lecturing and NGO work. She returned to the original department from which she had graduated:

So after I graduated initially I worked in the non-governmental sector in Bulgaria I worked for an NGO, a research type of NGO and I rather enjoyed it I got experience in actual research for five years. And I was partly teaching at that time but like only a couple of seminars or lectures, not as a permanent full time job. Then I decided to go back to studying myself so I went to [International University in Europe] for two years and after coming back to Bulgaria I basically made this choice. That was like a life choice that I do want to go back to academia and develop [...]Yes, I came back in 2001 in late autumn and what I did now, since, is I'm actually teaching, doing seminars. (Milena)

What is interesting is that these international experiences are translated quite quickly into meaningful personal approaches in building a unique individual position in the home institution. Daria presents this approach very well in her story of how she used her understanding of the discipline in order to create a good personal position for herself as an expert able to help in creating a new type of education in her home country:

I was already involved in this process of reformation of higher education [working for a Western foundation], and I decided that I should go somewhere abroad and have a degree and then maybe I come back and I can do something about it. [...]

And I think that my Western experience will give me a lot, especially my study in Scotland will give me lot, in terms of knowledge, and also maybe help me here because when I came back I had a slightly better position in the system because there were no experts from the West, and I knew literature and research theories and I was well aware in terms of what happens there. (Daria)

Significantly internationalized academics are often very aware of how each aspect of their work is a combination of influences derived from their varied academic locations, including the local and the Western. Jakub makes this clear in relation to his teaching practices:

I started teaching pre-US but if I am talking about post 2005 experience, the last three years I have this continuous teaching experience, this is pretty much a combination of three sources of experiences I got. Although I started my studies in Soviet times and then there was a terrible civil war period, still, I had some professors that could be model of contemporary and very modern professors, and I try to use this experience in my teaching too, and the [experience], from [an international university In Europe] and from the US. (Jakub)

Igor talks of a ‘synergy of influences’ consisting of organisation of summer schools in Ukraine and a fellowship in US during his doctoral training that made him the kind of academic he is:

Actually this was like the synergy of organisation of the summer schools, participation in the summer schools and American experience. I can’t say this is more influential or that, but this sequence or timeline they did that. (Igor, 6)

The significantly internationalised academics also feel more at home in the deeply transforming university contexts which allow them to be at home whilst practicing the skills they have developed abroad. This is exemplified well by Jakub’s narrative of his securing an academic teaching assistant job (junior lecturer who is simultaneously a doctoral student in the post-soviet denomination) following the completion of two Western MA degrees:

So these degrees allowed me to apply for the position, of assistant professor of political science, at [home university] when they started big changes and reforms basically they wanted to kick out old, soviet type of professors, whether it's the right definition or not, not sure but, that was the idea, and get new ones mostly with Western training. So then I got enrolled in PhD program in political science that allowed me to keep this position of assistant professor, otherwise if you are not already a PhD or are not doing a PhD you cannot have this position. So that's where I am now at this stage. (Jakub)

The significant difference between the narratives of profound internationalisation and those of significant internationalisation is that in the latter, at least one aspect of academic identity becomes rooted more in the local than in the international context. This is the case in particular with some of the research and publication strategies, where the academics recognise and follow the national standards and practices, whether or not they approve of them. This means that whilst they perceive themselves as strongly international, in publication terms they learn to accept the national rules of conduct. This concerns both publication venues and the type of publications that are considered research output which may be very different in nature from the international/Western (English language) publishing practices.

An aspect of practice that allows the significantly internationalised academics maintain a localised academic identity is their (predominantly) local or national orientation in research which usually allows them to develop a local network of academics in their field, resulting in local publications, conferences and collaborative projects. The local network may be of particular importance in peer reviewing the research output as well as in terms of developing or supporting one's teaching.

Anastasia and Daria, provide narratives on developing their local network:

And now we are building our network within Russian academy, with my colleagues, and I think that everything will be OK, we just had a big opening conference in spring and we are preparing another conference and so on. [...] When I write for my network, we already have some knowledge about everything and I don't waste paper on explaining this or that thing, I write exactly what I would like to develop in this particular paper. (Anastasia)

I have good cooperation with Kharkiv, because they have one of the best sociology departments there in Ukraine. [...] And I think that this network that we built there is really very helpful for me and for my colleagues because I really can say that I have a network of colleagues in Ukraine and also each department [participant in the program] had some partner department abroad so some foreign institutions are also involved there. But it is very important because we share information, we share, exchange courses or ideas about courses and materials, and taking into account the problem of resources, it's really very helpful. (Daria)

These narratives represent the most neutral or seamless integration of international aspects of career development into the project of building a coherent and situated academic identity. The division between this and the previous category is not absolute. Nevertheless, the majority of interviewees in the sample corresponded to this type of internationalisation in academic identity in the sense that they have maintained a sense of being essentially an academic from their home educational system.

6.2.3 Narratives of partial internationalization.

More minimal stories of internationalisation are also present in the sample, though the narratives of significant internationalization and profound internationalization are more numerous. The scarcity of these less internationalised narratives is obviously an outcome of targeting academics with records of some type of internationalization, and therefore often gaining access to those whose experiences were more long-term or numerous. This is partly the effect of this thesis' focus on these experiences and their meanings, or to put it differently, it is an outcome of the researcher's bias in developing a project around some kind of substantial internationalisation and its impact. It may well require another way of sampling as part of a different research design, to be able to provide an account of the meanings of partial internationalisation.

The less internationalised faculty may also display some aspects of internationalisation in their identity building. Only a brief sketch of the narratives of this kind can be offered here since their numbers are smaller. Numerous other studies focusing on short term programs offer some means of accessing these kinds of effects of internationalisation usually related to one specific program (e.g. Janson et al., 2009; Enders, 1998).

From my own limited sample, partial internationalization seems to be usually an effect of several but more short term stays abroad such as through shorter study and research scholarships. It may involve some research work done in a foreign institution but not as part of a degree program or not during the key identity-forming stages of doctoral research

training. Even very few foreign conferences may become significant events in this type of internationalised identity-building and are experienced and understood as important. Some of the experiences of partial internationalisation may be undertaken later on in the academic's career, when they feel well-established and in no need of explicit academic training.

The main academic life for those who construct this narrative is located in the home context, and international experience may be perceived as a novelty, an eye-opening moment, or a useful addition to the professional resume.

For example Stefan (already a doctorate holder and a lecturer in Romania) gains a better understanding of Western sociology through conferences abroad:

Of course in last, in last two years [I participated] in a few international conferences in different Western countries, and those were also, I think successes, and I, I had the occasion [to meet], very, very good professors, researchers from Britain, from France, from Germany, from Netherlands, and to see what is the level in Western Europe. (Stefan)

But another effect of this new frame of reference could be a new, and often less positive assessment of one's own standing in the discipline. For Stefan, this meant realising that one is not in fact part of the international level of academic achievement, and there is little chance of gaining that level in the future:

If I compare myself with my colleagues, maybe I am a top sociologist but if I compare with the Westerners I am just a beginner and I have to be realistic. These conferences, they made me realistic, and to know that I am just a beginner and I have to learn more. (Stefan)

Usually the narrative categorisation provided by most of the academics in the sample which corresponds to the stage of partial internationalisation was that these first experiences constituted a ‘cultural shock’, or an experience of ‘opening to the world’ experienced as a visitor in a foreign country. These were in the majority of cases recalled as important, life changing and positive experiences. In many ways, these first experiences may be perceived as a significant challenge to the academic’s dominant national-level identity and frame of reference.

This is shown in the narrative of Julius (who are elsewhere providing discourses of significant or in aspects, even profound internationalization):

And when you go outside into another country you really get a cultural shock, you get some experience and you, if you realise why this society was successful and what is the basic idea which is lying behind this success, and then you realise, of course you want to try this in your own society and then you, you are a kind of, its like a sport, and then you want to also succeed. (Julius)

Therefore, a more appropriate way of looking at partial internationalisation in my sample would be as a first step, a first set of experiences of academia abroad (or even of another country in general) that may later lead to significant internationalisation as other opportunities arise. Seen in this way, we can see partial internationalisation as a kind of discourse that may coexist in the sample with narratives of significant or profound internationalisation, at different stages of the professional development story.

For example, Anton's participation in a conference was one such significant first step, opening the doors for him to other opportunities:

The most important experience was this conference in Belgium, I met there, I had a poster there, I was asking some questions of course, OK I did not go there to show myself or something, but, you know, when you are asking questions people can get to know what you are interested in, (Anton)

Overall, the discourses of partial internationalisation result in a new, additional frame of reference for academic work and in a comparative perspective on one's own educational system. In the majority of cases in my sample the result of partial internationalisation was further experiences leading to more profound effects on the academic identity.

6.3 Summary of findings regarding internationalisation in constructions of academic identity.

In this chapter the discussion of internationalisation in the construction of academic identities was continued in relation to different experiences and their key consequences for the construction of academic identity. This completes the analysis of the ways in which internationalisation impacted the professional identity construction of the interviewed academics in broad biographical terms. In the second part of this chapter I considered different ways in which the internationalised academic identity interacted with the national academic identity, producing somewhat different types or narratives of hybrid identity. The effect of internationalisation could be self-constructed as profound aspect of identity-work,

effectively augmenting the original/national identity with a new one, or it could be perceived as identity-enhancing in significant ways by giving access to specific aspects of the Western academic practice. Finally, internationalisation was sometimes experienced as providing an opening to the sought-after but still unattainable international dimensions of the profession.

Chapter 7: The meanings of internationalisation for academic practice.

7.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters were aimed at exploring the meanings of internationalization in relation to the perception of professional identity among the individuals studied, thus attempting to sketch out an answer to Research Question 1. This has entailed dealing with internationalization as a set of events and a set of meanings associated with individual academic development, career progression or as part of overall life narrative. This and the following chapter have a related but more specific research focus on internationalisation as it affects academic practice and policy evaluation. This chapter will aim to provide some answers to the initial Research Question 2: What are the effects of internationalisation on the academic's understanding of their professional practice, policy change and their position in higher education?

In this analysis I intend to report and discuss the meanings associated with the impact of internationalisation on teaching, research, academic collaboration and the relationships with colleagues and students. The core of the material studied here are various accounts of classroom practice or of research and academic collaboration derived from the academics' international experiences and constructed as meaningful reference points for how they should be and act as professionals. This means uncovering their evaluations of the various workplaces they have subsequently found themselves in as foci of academic work set against

and compared with the international experience in various Western or Western-like locations (as interpreted by the interviewees). The larger purpose here is to carry on the critical examination of academic transformations of identity and practice that this research has set out to explore in order to notice both the coherent and inconsistent/contradictory aspects of these transformations and to better understand what kind of a construction of a practitioner is emerging in the post-soviet and post-socialist space out of the possibilities offered by internationalization.

The chapter takes a somewhat different analytical orientation to the material, in as much as it departs from the synthesizing approach of the narrative inquiry and supplements it with a more analytical approach commonly used in qualitative interview research. I am no longer providing a general analytical synthesis of the experience of internationalization or a holistic analysis of the entire interview, based on selected key turning points, narratives or concepts (as in chapters 5 and 6). Rather, I have used an approach that is closer to qualitative analysis based on specific relevant ‘chunks’ of the interviews. This means that the analysis performed here is based on fragments of life narratives, treated similarly to qualitative interview material. The meanings associated with academic practice are derived from fragments of the life narrative itself and from specific answers to my additional questions which have been categorised and grouped together for interpretation. The discussion of this analytical approach is found in Chapter 4.

7.2 Effects of internationalisation in relation to academic research practice.

7.2.1 Effects on disciplinary specialisation areas.

The effects of international experiences on the academics' perception of their discipline (e.g. their own research orientation or content knowledge) were consistently reported as one of the key impacts of internationalisation by nearly all of the interviewees from these specific transforming university contexts. This area of learning was one of the most readily taken up in the interviews and the most directly described, and it was assessed as vital for professional development and for building the interviewee's career. This is partly related to this area of academic work being responsible for providing some of the most important material for the constructions and reconstructions of individual academic identity.

Since many of the faculty interviewed undertook a course of study abroad or audited courses as a kind of parallel training in their discipline, their internationalisation is strongly merged in their narratives with the formative period of student experience. It is the student experience (in contrast to other student experiences before) that is clearly constructed as contributing to what they now know as academics about their field.

Importantly, many of the most formative of these experiences are not recalled as positive transforming experiences, but rather as personal triumphs in the face of real difficulties associated with achieving success in a Western-style educational context. This relates directly to the interviewees' perceived success in becoming academics. The difficulties were associated with different academic demands placed on them, often in a new discipline and

always in a second language. The story emerging from these narratives about early academic practice as international postgraduate students is one of formation of vital disciplinary skills emerging out of a significant cognitive or academic challenge placed on them by the new context.

Some relevant examples of these effects are shared by Daria, Sergei, Davit, and Jakub:

Yes, the problem was that in Budapest we had courses, when I changed the discipline and I was given readings where they presumed I already had some knowledge, so some theories are mentioned or some categories that were taught already at BA level. Because I did not have this background, the first half year was really quite tough for me because I had to read much more than everybody else who came with much more sociology background. Because I had to know what these theories refer to or what is the theoretical or methodological discussion behind these articles we were dealing with at the MA level. So at some point I was crying, it was difficult for me to switch. But then I realised that I really liked it. (Daria)

Well, the beginning of year was kind of hard for me because I didn't have this experience, my research skills still were not, experience and skills were kind of not very much adequate, so I was, at the beginning it was difficult, but then I overcame, I overcame. There were certain frustrations over the marks I got sometimes, but on the whole I remember it as a very nice time in my life, something that really changed my life academically and my life too. (Davit)

So that was a huge experience in that sense, but as for learning experience it was very different because, it was very intensive coursework. In Russian 'aspirantura' you had to pass only four exams, economy, philosophy, language and something. A couple of coursework. In US it's a treadmill, like we have the quarter system, each quarter, you have to write an essay. I remember the essay on theory construction, with a teacher, on three volumes of theoretical sociology so in two weeks you have to write an essay on three volumes. [...] So in that sense, it was intense and I think I learned some of this ability to do [this] without spending years on some things

and got lots of knowledge, got lots of knowledge. Because the professors were great there and sometimes, in Russia people also get knowledge through Internet but at that time it was not available. (Sergei)

In the light of these narratives of learning a discipline, internationalization equals noticing and embracing gaps or differences in the way the interviewees were taught locally as against the way the discipline is subsequently experienced or studied abroad. It entails a value re-orientation towards the Western standards of social science education, and this is reflected in the interviewees embracing the demands placed on them and acknowledging the new disciplinary identity that these experiences made possible.

For example, Sofia sees her foreign MA as the best and most direct point of access to international knowledge through a curriculum based on a selection of Western texts which are clearly perceived as portraying a better, more up to date, and more central perspective on the field of study:

[International university in Europe], in comparison to all the Universities in Russia I studied at or visited somehow, CEU was the best of all of them, because in sociology, it gives international knowledge, because in English language I can get access to much more and broader variety of sources or information, books. (Sofia)

The effect of such newly acquired perspectives on the content of the discipline often led to a significant increase in self confidence and a feeling of having gained not just knowledge but a kind of different academic capital (as well as a new overall sense of academic identity). This leads to comparisons being made with the academic's colleagues in the original departments, who are now perceived as either more or less 'internationalised' and therefore more or less prepared to understand the current trends or interests of the discipline. This aspect of the

newly acquired comparative self-evaluation is clearly stated by Anastasia as she sums up the effect of one of her international programs (a half year spent in an international MA as a guest postgraduate student):

It shaped my brain into these whole new perspectives, I was reading a lot again and when I came back to [home city university], I felt very, very confident, because I looked at many things from very different points of view, and I looked at my older colleagues as people who are not so, maybe, did not have such erudition, as I had after this few months in [European city]. (Anastasia)

It is important to notice the hybrid character of such narratives- even as she judges her colleagues as somewhat less exposed to foreign literature in the discipline, Anastasia uses the term ‘erudition’ which is a term strongly embedded in Eastern and Central European higher education discourse (with discursive focus on erudition or factual knowledge as opposed to academic skills training of the Western systems). What Anastasia is referring to here is not erudition in the sense of factual knowledge but erudition in terms of broad reading base and exposure to multiple newer theoretical perspectives, research approaches and actual research manuscripts that the Western program allowed her to access.

The general construction of the academic purpose of internationalisation emerges in these narratives. It is the construction of Western universities as ‘centres of excellence’ and therefore as legitimate alternative loci of individual disciplinary identity building. This identity work is clearly visible in both the narrative ‘emplotment’ of the experiences as life changing moments or key learning experiences and also in the deeply emotional language

associated with the difficulties encountered and the resulting impact on individual self-esteem.

7.2.2 Effects on research skills.

Whether speaking directly about research skills or more broadly about disciplinary specialisation, the academics tended to construct these learning experiences as amending or complicating their initial vision of the field of academic research, in terms of range or scope of methods they may choose to use and an understanding of how they are used to produce academic publications and to advance the field. This sense of a breakthrough in disciplinary perspective and reshaping of one's subsequent academic toolkit in research skills was strongly reported in the narrative of Anastasia and Tamar, but was present in other narratives too. For example, Anastasia is explicit about being re-trained as a historian who no longer follows a narrow, positivist vision of historical research. Tamar's narrative on her American fellowship makes it quite explicit that the agenda has been to understand how research in her discipline is done in the West, and more materially, what it looks like when translated into journal articles. This realization is perceived as an eye opener or some kind of a revelation:

I started thinking differently. Because I was taught at the university in a kind of different way. [...] Yes, simply, I was brought up under this communist tradition and this methodology, straightforward Marxist methodology and as a historian I was trained to think positivistically, you know 'there is a source, and there is an interpretation, and the interpretation must be connected to this particular source and not so free in my mind. (Anastasia)

Then I fully realised. It was [department name] and it was social psychology which is top five [departments in the US], which is very high quality, and I did a lot of readings, I went to enormous amount of classes. Because I did not have to pass exam or something so I just audited these classes, so this way I could do that and I went to a lot of talks and so on. And there let's say I fully grasped the idea of how the research is done in Western countries ... [...] And I know how it is done there and I think I see how I can do this research and how I can write these articles, I started now to produce. After I got something at [US university] I think it is time to start to produce. (Tamar)

There is a clear sense in Tamar's narrative, that despite being a fully formed academic already (with a doctoral degree and teaching experience), she saw 'this research' and the ability to write 'these articles' as a whole new/foreign way of being an academic, one to which, after several short-term visiting programs, she felt she had a chance to finally aspire to in her own practice.

Clearly the influence of the internationalisation experience is one of significant discipline-related changes in academic identity (and related research practice) in that the international programs experienced are perceived as giving access to a new research area in the discipline, one that would be underdeveloped or even inaccessible in the local context. It is in this vein, that Anastasia develops her significant exposure to women's history, which is to become her main research agenda during the short stays in British universities and libraries, Jakub supports his strategy of gaining a second MA in US as a decision to get acquainted with quantitative research in political science, and Katerina is explicit about having gained a wider range of research methodologies in her American MA that would be unavailable in a legal studies department in Russia:

We didn't have access to information, to journals. Our journals, historical journals and academic monthlies they were not so interesting in terms of posing questions, even when I chose my topic, women's history, it was very, very exotic at that moment, nobody did it, in my region for example, this history at that particular moment. (...) So I simply started reading things that I never read before, and it was like opening the whole space for me. (Anastasia)

As a researcher that is more American influence now because I went to the states for particular objective to study better this quantitative stuff, I became very much interested in that, and it's totally their influence that I don't, I cannot say that I don't like, but I am not that much interested in qualitative research right now, and, although I have to do sometimes qualitative studies – it's how it works in terms of publications in Georgia, you are sometimes asked to write a paper for a particular publication, a particular topic, so you cannot do that so quickly if you have to collect data and do this and that so, sometimes we are constrained with qualitative analysis - but, I, for example for my dissertation, and where I can choose myself what method to use, I would always prefer quantitative methods. (Jakub)

Well, in terms of research I think my American [program] shaped me a lot, because speaking about criminology, and not only about criminology but just research in general. It seems that in social sciences not many people really know how to do the research. And especially at the time when I just entered the PhD program, I really didn't have anybody to talk to, about how I should do a criminological research. Because no one could really teach me about quantitative methods, also qualitative methods, especially because I was studying at the [legal studies department], and usually people were doing legal research they are not using those methods that are very handy in research in criminology. (...) And so of course when I went to the States I had to take classes in different research methods. And also I had to do some research on my own, so in terms of research that really shaped me. (Katerina)

These narratives strongly associate research approaches available through internationalisation as transforming of their academic identity and this is revealed through the use of specific

special and material metaphors (gaining access to a new space, being shaped) as well as through the discourse of academic work as a creative individual pursuit (choosing a research method, being interested in an approach). The academics' accounts bear witness to internationalization as a form of delayed academic training, not to say remedial academic training in the social sciences.

This orientation towards internationalization as remedial resulted in a predominant view among the interviewees that ongoing training and international programs are needed for them to continue to develop as academics.

What is particularly important in these ongoing desires to continue to develop academically through international programs is that the Western academic contexts have been quite consistently categorized as 'a promised land' of innovation in the discipline or in research approaches and as the more legitimate centres of knowledge production. In other words, another way of constructing the purpose of internationalisation for individual academic self is to see the Western universities as 'donors' of skill-sets and associated resources that are locally unavailable. The local academic context is both retrospectively, and by ongoing comparisons, constructed as unreformed, lagging behind and seriously lacking in quality in social sciences and humanities. In some cases, the academics interviewed have been very explicit about these binary evaluations, at least in relation to some institutions which they had themselves left behind when they went westwards for their own postgraduate education or for further training:

[...] I still think that I miss a lot of things especially this research methods and something like this, this kind of thing, this is the weakest part in social sciences in Georgia. So I think there is room for improvement, for me personally, so I don't think that since I have reached something now that is the end. (Julius)

This degree of dissatisfaction with what the national educational system could offer and what it had been offering to them as students and young researchers surely must amount to some very interesting dilemmas in their own practice when they come back to work in national institutions (and some would come back to those same universities they had studied in as undergraduates). These dilemmas will emerge very explicitly when academics evaluate their institutions' potential for 'reform' or 'improvement' and their participation in such reform processes. These insights will be the subject of the following chapter.

It is clear that on the level of the construction of appropriate academic practice (which is itself a functional extension of the academic identity), the effects of internationalization among the interviewed academics amounted to a significant and abrupt shift in how they perceive their own academic work. Western educational perspectives were adopted as reference points for judging what constitutes quality research and research training.

7.2.3 Effects on research publication and presentation.

How this shift in identity construction would correspond to those academics' own work in research, and in teaching is an interesting next question to discuss. There is no single pattern of translation of the international into local practice that emerges out of the interviews since the level of engagement with the Western system varied as did disciplinary contexts and

individual research preferences. For a few interviewees, the reported pattern of their own academic research and writing corresponds to the new adopted Western view of what constitutes good quality research. This means that these academics are either actively producing research for Western publication channels or aspiring to do so in the near future. These academics indicate that they feel capable of participating in both local and international publication channels, juggling different genres, styles of writing, and different formats of peer review.

Most notably this is the case with Artur who holds two foreign doctorates and feels completely integrated into the international research network, even being able to use his Russian positioning as a distinct advantage in gaining access to conferences or publication calls and in terms of having wider impact on his discipline.

[Working in Russia] That is much better then staying at a small American university and maybe published an article per year but here, people read me. So I loose something, I gain something. However, I do systematically continue international career, I go to international conferences all the time, I publish and so far so good. I publish in English, in French, not as much as I would like to, but I do. And perhaps one advantage that I do have is that people invite me to frequently conference or publications as a Russian, as a representative of the [home] university. So paradoxically, there is an advantage to being here. (Artur).

Igor does not hold a Western doctorate but has managed to collaborate with a number of colleagues from abroad leading to co-authored publications in English and a strong conviction that is his career objective it really is ‘publish or perish’ in foreign peer reviewed journals, and definitely not in the local publication venues:

Actually my opinion is that to publish economic papers in Ukraine is just spending your time for nothing. Because we don't have internationally recognised journals here, therefore my aim is to publish in Western journals, not the top rank, but say middle rank journals. (Igor)

For others, the Western area of academic research and publication is a largely unfulfilled aspiration, one that they attempted or would like to attempt, but so far without significant success. In many cases this may be partly related to the fact that the interviewed academics were at the beginning of their publishing lives, before or not long after defending their PhDs. For these academics, participation in international level research presentation was occurring mainly through conference presentations, which sometimes lead to edited volumes produced in English.

In this second category, Sergei reports his ongoing struggle with getting through the peer review process for a journal publication, a process that has been so far unsuccessful, and he reports benefits from switching his strategy to presenting at various international research networks meetings as an easier strategy of research presentation:

I saw a couple of global organisations I was not aware of in the US, I mentioned one of them. And I applied for presentation there and I got new contacts there and it was good because it works again internationally actually. [...] But it is very hard to get a single peer-reviewed publication in peer-reviewed journals. I tried a couple of journals and they declined but its pretty normal, the rate is 5-10 percent, in the most prestigious journals. They told me what to change, I am working on my empirical stuff. (Sergei)

Others have developed an extended research publication record already in the local context and their international experiences they engaged in was not enough to change their available

orientations and practices. They reported publishing mainly for a national level publication, either because that is what would count in their career progression in the local institution, or because it was easier and more in keeping with their own style of writing and it helped them to function in a more localized academic network. In fact, Anastasia is so focused on the national channels of presenting her research (either in a specialised circle of researchers or for broader acceptable journals that count towards promotion) that she does not exactly recall the details of some of her English language publications that were either translated or written in English (in various edited volumes, often as a result of an international research collaboration or conference).

There were a couple of research articles I presented at conferences and I submitted them to these [edited] books, one is going to be published in Finland, and another in Oxford University Press. I don't remember, I don't know exactly where. But anyway, not in Russian. (Anastasia)

It seems that despite all the importance of the process of internationalisation in research training, the local context matters much more to those who work locally, and the best way to use the insights into research from abroad is to translate it into local career building strategy. It is stated or implied by some of academics interviewed that the national context does not yet value or encourage Western publications and the career progression depends on publishing in nationally designated journals. But for some others, the situation was becoming reversed, and having English-language publications was becoming the more legitimate career strategy. This was the case with most of the Georgian academics who quite consistently see the competitive advantage of publishing in English for their local career chances.

Thus international experience translates much better into the formation of overall research identity, then to actual participation in an international research network, particularly when it comes to research publication in a Western context. It may be possible that this level of participation in Western academia is more closed to the internationalised Eastern European academics located on the periphery of the research networks, or it is more illusive for them, with the exception of some of those who feel they are leading a fully international career. For some others, this is an aspect of academic practice that these academics had perceived less need for as they situated themselves primarily in the local or national research context.

7.2.4 Effects on academic language and expression.

Another highly problematic aspect of practice related to research training and to publishing strategies which goes to the heart of internationalising of academic practice is learning to express one's academic ideas in a foreign language (in academic English in nearly all cases). Just as in the case of 'catching up' with previously unknown content of the discipline or with the available range of research approaches, this aspect of change in academic practice was often achieved through experiences of initial failure or acute difficulty and often embarrassment as the academics adapted to new expectations. The subsequent examples show how learning the foreign academic language could also occur on many different levels, from simply practicing speaking, reading and writing in English (as a general experience of 'opening up' to a new worldview and new disciplinary content), through learning the principles of academic writing and argumentation in English, to learning distinct academic

genres or formats associated with graduate education in an English speaking country (such as a ‘thesis prospectus’)

This was of very huge importance for me, for my personal development. First I started speaking English. Because before I was learning English at school but it was not a very good school and it was not a very good training. At the university I was not at the language department, I was at the history department and we had English courses but again very poor. And this particular experience of going to England, of speaking to people, speaking to the experts in the field I chose, they made me more, more convinced and they opened my ability to speak, to understand something and the whole situation that was going on in my field, I chose women’s history as my field, I met many interesting people, and I started attending conferences, listening to others, presenting my own papers so it was very, very important. (Anastasia)

First of all it was very important in terms of getting skills of academic writing in English because I never, I had never been writing papers in English before. (Emil)

And then OK I went to the States again to [a university] and I had about fifty pages written something in Georgian, because, and I thought that was a kind of good beginning [of a doctoral thesis] and when I came there and I asked people [laughs] what, the PhD students, how they are writing, then I had some kind of supervisor who was kind and caring, he asked me for first draft, I brought a draft of my dissertation, then he asked me about the prospectus, I said what is a prospectus [laughs]? I did not know, what was a written prospectus, then I went to other people and I realised what was a prospectus. And this was so shocking, I realised that all things which I had [learnt] was nothing, then I started from zero, and I went to the libraries, in Congress and everywhere and I started to work and interview people. (Julius)

It is interesting that all of these different levels of engagement with the foreign language are perceived as equally helpful in terms of building an aspect of academic practice (and of course of the academic self). These significant impacts of learning English on the professional

development of the academic were seen as direct help in academic training. Access to English as an academic language is understood as a necessity and is an eagerly pursued personal development opportunity for these social scientists as it has facilitated their access to people and resources in their field or to alternative research training. Of course, English as the global academic language and practices associated with writing and presenting in it also construct further the centre-periphery dynamic of internationalisation for these academics.

Access to English is also seen on a very personal or intimate level as new way of experiencing the world and as a help in developing further the personal style of expression when writing, even in their native language. So the academic language thus developed is an important tool in the academic individualisation process. In Anton's narrative, the contribution of learning academic English is perceived as helpful for his academic expression in Bulgarian (though the learning of this style of academic English actually occurred in Germany). The academic writing style in English is perceived as simpler because of being devoid of unnecessary self-constructed latinisations or jargon which characterises the Bulgarian academic language in his discipline:

That is one thing I got from Germany and I really appreciate it. There was this one principle, if you want to say something, and you have to say something, just say it and say nothing more, that was the leading motto [at the institution]. Like, don't go around and say these funny things and other funny things and too complicated, just say directly how it is and nothing more. And I really appreciate it, I think that adds something to my work. Before this I was really pissed off with this. Even in this cultural studies [undergraduate program] we were laughing that some typical Bulgarian proverbs you can say them in Latin words just with Bulgarian endings and that is how they make science. And if you don't say things this way you don't know the scientific language. (Anton)

In the case of Artur, the exposure to two writing styles, English and French, is seen to blend into his own unique form of expression and forms the basis of his hybrid academic identity. In both cases the learning achieved abroad translates directly and productively into the native language.

On the other hand, the reporting of learning of the foreign language, style and format in these interviews is clearly a part of a broader positioning of oneself as closer to what is now perceived the centre of academic world (which firmly resides in the Western countries according to these academics). The preoccupation with the newly acquired language is also a mark of partial distancing oneself from the local academic world, now seen as a periphery, though paradoxically, it is usually the native language that remains the main locus of their work and of their subsequent career progression.

7.3 Effect on understanding of teaching practices.

The impact on the interviewees' understanding of professional practice and the ways of being an academic were wider than just the knowledge of content, research methods or the language of academic writing. The effects on teaching practices are clearly reported in just as many specific narratives or in answer to a direct follow up question.

However, in the case of these particular findings I need to be particularly self-aware and cautious in my analysis and acknowledge the possible influence of the interviewer on what was reported. I am known to some of the interviewees (though not to all of them) as a

professional educational developer or teacher trainer, dealing with Western-style teaching and learning practices (for the most part) and working for a centre that gives funding for the adaptation of such practices into local classrooms. I could have been understood as being particularly interested in this particular dimension of practice. Therefore, in this area there is some potential that several of these strong effects of internationalization on their teaching practices are somehow elicited in this particular research more than the other areas of practice. Nevertheless, the academics interviewed were often very categorical in inserting these meanings into their own life narratives and in re-telling them as meanings that are relevant for them as teachers. Therefore, while some bias could have been felt, I believe this orientation should not be simply discounted as performance for the sake of the interview.

7.3.1 The productivity of Western teaching approaches for espoused practice.

As in the case of research-related effects of internationalization, in this area the academics interviewed constructed their international experiences as significant. In fact, there was a pronounced identification of Western approaches to teaching as promising or innovative. There was definitely a strong perception of the local contexts as rather different than the Western context in relation to teaching and relationships with students in most, though not in all interviews.

Specific aspects of teaching practice and the organization of teaching were mentioned in nearly all of the interviews as areas of difference observed and experienced as students or visitors at foreign universities. The most widely described areas of difference were general

‘student-centredness’ in the educational process (versus a perception of a generally impersonal, ‘instructional’ approach in their own universities), a learning process based on a heavy reading load of original books or articles (versus learning based on summaries of texts and concepts prepared by the lecturer and delivered in class), a curriculum based on a wider choice of mainly elective courses (as against a rigid curriculum of mainly obligatory courses), interactive or seminar-based teaching (as opposed to lecturing method and teacher-led questioning of students in the ‘practicum’ type seminar), ongoing student assessment based on extensive academic writing requirements (as opposed to a system based on the predominance of oral exams or written ‘question-and-answer’ type of exams).

As with research and disciplinary areas, the overall strong association of internationalization with the improvement of the academics’ teaching skills or exposure to alternative (Western) teaching practices came particularly strongly from the experience of being a student in a completely different educational setting. Being a student in an international or Western context is called upon by Lukas, Daria and Katerina as a formative experience in this respect. Lukas lists small seminar style teaching and a focus on the student’s choice of courses (referring to the style of teaching and curriculum design experienced in his first international MA program) and he understands these as personally meaningful, ‘engaging’ learning experiences:

Of course it was an entirely new way of studies. Classes were small, the relationships were less formal with lecturers. So I did not need to study educational skills because I studied educational skills while I was a student so it was very engaging. Also elective [courses] at that time. (...) Now they have more obligatory classes at the Medieval Studies department. At that time it was only few obligatory classes like MA thesis seminar or

academic writing seminar or something but most of the classes were free [elective]. And I chose, it was difficult for me even initially to choose. Because for the first time, I was given the opportunity to choose between classes and it's a difficult choice, it was difficult. For instance, I realised that now I have to kind of see what time I have [to devote] for each discipline. I cherished this course on medieval Latin hagiography, but then I realised that I didn't know Latin at the same level as those who will take it because my level is not so advanced so I will have a great struggle with these texts and I will lose a lot of time and so what to do, I gave it up. So, I took the other courses which were more realistic to take but anyhow they were based on my interest. I did not take the course on medieval economy of Bohemia or something, but I took courses that were very interesting, theological, philosophical courses, Greek courses and so on. That was a big opportunity and a great experience. (Lukas)

For Lukas, his MA is an experience of having this curricular freedom and individual responsibility for the first time in his student experience, and he also equates the experiences of small group seminar-style classes with professional development. This is understood as a direct way of gaining teaching skills through personal experience of the alternative teaching approaches.

Daria stresses her learning experiences based on highly demanding tasks, lots of individual reading and writing and 'tough' grading criteria as the best part of her second, UK-based MA program, suggesting that these methods are responsible for her perception of the high level of education received in this specific educational context:

And of course at [a British university], because the level of education there, I mean the grading system is completely different and if you are used to getting quite easily good marks here it is completely different in Britain. I mean you work hard, and then you can get a B and it's good, it's a very good result.

So from the one side it is tough, but it was very interesting to have this level of education, to have that it is tough but then you do something, you build up yourself, you read a lot.

Because we had this course with one supervisor and my supervisor was giving me eight or six books to read within one week. So you read a lot but at the same time you have a lot of time for yourself, I mean studying in the library, looking for scholarships, you have resources as well. (Daria)

Daria clearly identifies much tougher grading criteria and reading demands with a context that is focused on work with the individual (though in this case clearly postgraduate) students and a context that allows her the freedom to ‘build herself up’ as an academic.

Katerina contrasts her own university’s approach to educating students (based on oral exams requiring memorisation and repeating of lecture course content) to a whole range of methods that appear to be different in the US. She lists the allowance of interactivity in classes and even in lectures, the usage of various instructional methods (such as visual aids and student teachers) and a range of exam formats:

And in the States, first of all, I saw many different teaching approaches, and also that lecturing can be not the only way of getting information to the students and does not necessarily have to do lecturing and even if it is lecturing, you can use many additional ways to do, deliver information, that you can use PowerPoint, and in some ways you can use students’ presentation to do, deliver of some of the lecture materials, so it can be different. Also evaluation or assessment is very different in the States then here. Here it is still more like having those oral exams and when you see students shaking, shivering in front of you and just forgetting everything, just because they are so scared of the professor, and usually the professor requires that the students recite the same things that the professor taught them at the lectures. So it’s not much of free thinking. Basically what was written in the textbook or what was written during the lectures. And in the States it was more like... sometimes we didn’t have exams, we just had to write a paper, some critical thinking paper, something like that. And even if

we had exam papers in the written form, it was much less stress, and actually the professor who was doing a written exam I think he can evaluate the students because it imposes less stress on the students, they think they can really show what they know much better. (Katerina)

Many of these views could be dismissed as somewhat naïve from the educational development point of view, such as the equation of PowerPoint with a good or ‘progressive’ tool for lecturing. However, it is clear that something significant is occurring here in relation to the formation of these teachers’ views (and later, reported practices) regarding what are acceptable teaching formats. They consider their internationalisation as a way to fill the gaps in this aspect of academic practice, probably responding to the relative lack of training or professional development opportunities in this area at home universities as much as responding to the perceived contrasts in the observed typical practices in different national contexts. Another aspect of this is that the Western teaching approaches are not understood in very critical ways (with one or two exceptions), rather, they are seen as something that Eastern European academics should aspire to. It is very clear that one aspect of the attractiveness of these processes lies in them being part and parcel of a significant process of individualisation and that they are directly experienced as part of postgraduate training. This is clearly seen in many of these narratives, where personal freedom, choice, individual responsibility, a more direct relationship with the senior academic as a tutor rather than the lecturer-examiner, become part of the defining experience of these alternative educational settings.

7.3.2 Internationalised influences on teaching in reported practice.

Another critical question is to what extent this knowledge has become the basis of the academics' own teaching approaches and what local dynamics this might produce.

On one level, observing such methods or taking part in courses run in alternative ways is reported as a source of skills relevant for one's own teaching, which will be adapted to different situations depending on available institutional space for such innovation. For example, there is a shared realisation among several interviewees that Western education [and here Anglo-Saxon educational contexts are usually meant] is the source of interactive methods of teaching in both large classrooms and small seminars. These methods are variously labelled as cooperative methods, communicative approaches, student-centred teaching and they are construed as preferable or better than the more traditional lecturing approaches. But more than that, they are also referred to as aspects of one's own subsequent practice, even if there are significant perceived difficulties in applying these methods successfully:

Then this American experience also helped me to see, like how the whole semester goes in a good university in US, how students behave in class, how teachers behave, how to cooperate. (Igor)

And from the United States [I took], that is more, how to say, more teamwork, especially in public administration and policy programs, professional programs are organised as teamwork all the time, you are asked to write group projects and group papers all the time and everything rests on group discussion then. Although it is very difficult to replicate this in Georgia because, people cannot differentiate always, personal relations and then work relations, in this case study related relations, if I ask them to form groups then friends are getting together, if I distribute group members randomly, then someone doesn't like someone and then, finally, the group project suffers, but I still keep trying to, you know, persuade them that this is the only way you can

succeed in your professional life and career, otherwise.. No one is doing individual work almost in any organisation, at some point you need to cooperate with others, right?

These are the main streams that influenced my teaching somehow. (Jakub)

The level of acquired expertise in relation to these skills is obviously varied among participants of different levels of teaching experience and with different specific backgrounds. Tamar clearly states that she had already been exposed to these methods before her trip to US through NGO based training activities she had led, (it was ‘nothing new to her’) but still the observed teaching practices are seen as expanding her already existing skills set and she does report using these methods in her own classroom, though coming up with distinct cultural obstacles:

But there were still some things, like I found out that even with 200 and 300 students and you could communicate with the students. Although I was doing that anyway- I had 120 at most. You could still ask them questions and talk to the students and so on. But in smaller groups they would have discussions but that was nothing new for me.

But while I tried to introduce these new teaching methods like discussions, it’s very heavy. Now I have mostly smaller groups of maybe twenty students and I try to push them into discussions because Georgian people are so chaotic and not organised they all speak at the same time, I cannot understand what they are saying. So it’s kind of quite hard task to do but I still do that. (Tamar)

Igor points to two distinct techniques related to the wider organisation of curriculum and learning he acquired through his Western experience: the course syllabus distributed to students and a new grading scale based on 100 points or per cent, to replace (or to be used together with) the traditional post-soviet grading scale. The grading system clearly comes

together with the usage of several assessment formats (essays, projects) or of some kind of continuous assessment rather than the traditional end-of term assessment methods:

I think I was the first in our faculty to start distributing syllabus to the students, so it was very new, they asked, ‘can we keep this or should we return this?’, and they well, I had this formative evaluation [student assessment] this hundred points evaluation [scale] not three, four and five marks only, and like essays, different projects so it was something new so it’s not [usual]. It was not old style ‘referat’ so you just need to copy a book, but it was something that you need to think about and give your critical remarks on some issue. (Igor)

Milena has formed her opinion on what works best in teaching through a reflection on her own learning, something that her international experiences simply confirmed. She is one of several interviewees who describe in detail which methods they actually use in their own classrooms. Davit also mentions specific innovations he is trying to introduce, which are based directly on his experiences abroad, but he describes the process as a struggle, a difficult attempt to change local practices of his own students:

In general I know from being a former student myself that it is much more interesting to learn new things in the interaction process, so I always try to organise the teaching process as an interaction process. We play special games, I divide people into groups and these groups interact with each other, and I give assignments that people have to do in groups so I am trying to be innovative and students like that very much because is different from what they are used to. (Milena)

Normally the students aren’t inclined to interactive teaching. Though at MA level I’m pleased with it, surely the research skills aren’t enough, and of course in an Armenian group you cannot lack interaction. Sometimes it’s too much of this. Elaboration of these things still needs to be [better]. They aren’t assigned readings as such. I

assign them. It's difficult to check each individual's reading, of course on the level of the group you feel they normally don't read much at all.

[...]Well of course there is more liberalism in the classroom. With some borders, the very notion of giving them handouts, making presentations during class, wasn't there at all. The only thing before was lecturing, seminars, lecturing, seminars. And seminars, maybe for technical reasons, weren't interesting. Readers, that's a novelty. Excerpts from different books. Of course there's difficulty with them and with me as a teacher, to use English language materials. Which are the majority especially in fields like nationalism. (Davit)

Davit's account is a good introduction to the problem of innovations that may become failures, in some of the more conservative local contexts where even the most enthusiastic Western-educated teacher may have very little success in affecting any sort of change in the dominant teaching or student learning approaches. The local cultural context comes with different expectations of the value of interaction or the value of independent student research or preparation at home, and this is part and parcel of dominant educational philosophies and standard assessment and teaching practices. It means that often introducing teaching methods derived from Western contexts is a difficult and even a mistaken teaching strategy.

For Davit, the biggest area of difficulty generated by introducing new student assignments (argumentative essays or small research papers instead of reading summaries) was the predominance of plagiarism that comes on the back of such innovations in educational contexts used to the reproductive rather than the argumentative style of academic writing. In his interview he confesses that the problem is very widespread, making his work of requiring essays nearly meaningless in the local context. He supports this with a narrative in which he recalls a particularly mindless case of plagiarism, constructed as an ironic critical incident:

Plagiarism is just such an overall thing that if I decided to combat it, I wouldn't have a single paper. I'm saying 'please write me', no, it is required that they write a paper in that course and what they bring is plagiarized, partially sometimes, or total plagiarism at worst. I can just Google that. Once I was given such a paper. It was in English beginning with words "when I was teaching in Oxford", the paper begins like this! This person hasn't looked through this downloaded material, I said 'have you read this, you know English, you were teaching at Oxford, I'm sorry what do I have to do with you, if you were teaching at Oxford, maybe you should be teaching me!'. (Davit)

This suggests that the value of internationalisation experience as a training ground for alternative teaching approaches is very sensitive in terms of the dynamics of the local contexts and the potential of individual teachers to intervene in these contexts. Some of these teachers represent a somewhat naïve view that the experiences they had gone through in Western educational settings are directly translatable to educational approaches in non-Western contexts, and that they can be introduced without generating much confusion and resistance on the part of the students or colleagues. This sort of transplantation may be possible case in some institutions but may also lead to significant problems and subsequent frustrations in other settings.

7.3.3 Neutral or negative views on the impact of internationalisation on teaching practices.

Positive evaluations of teaching approaches experienced in Western educational contexts are predominant among my sample of internationalised faculty, but it is important to note that there are some quotes suggesting a distinctly less positive assessment of the level of Western students.

Artem and Sofia did not get an overwhelming sense of the international programs as better in terms of either content or teaching approaches to programs in their home country. Rather they notice and experience a higher quality of learning support or student welfare (organization of student life, availability and organization of library) offered by the university to the students:

Considering if we compare the international experiences and the experiences here, we talk about the academic life, I would not say that the academic level of teachers here is lower then I saw at [international programs in Eastern Europe]. But the whole idea of the school, like relations between the teachers and students and the facilities and so on, all this stuff, like additional, not the primary [issues], is much better there. (Artem)

In general, in general, at [international university in Europe] everything was organised to help students to study only, and not to be disturbed with other things like, taking care about your food, money, transportation, everything was organised, so I had a lot of time to study. We had a lot of things to read, to write, to do, but still we had time to do all these things, in Russia we also have a lot of reading to read for each class, but I do not have time because I have to waste like four hours each day for transportation to the university, I have to cook my food, clean my apartment, I don't know, to earn money, so I do not have time to do all these things and in this regard it was very valuable to be at [the international university in Europe] because this year, these ten months at [the university], they were the most relaxing for me, I was so relaxed, it was pleasure for me to study, because I love to study, its always a pleasure for me, and here I was only studying, it was great. (...) I don't know, just a different level of life, yeah. (...)

I have to say that maybe the library, how it works, the way how it works, I mean in Russia, if you go to library you have to order books and then wait for several hours, and then you have these books for short period of time and you have to give them back and if you want them you have to order them again, so it's very inconvenient system in Russia. And the people who work in the library, they get very low salary and so they are very angry, and when you go to the library you want to concentrate and to think about some important things and these

people just do not let you concentrate, they shout, they tell you some humiliating things, I don't know, just a different level of life. (Milena)

It is clear that much of the satisfaction from studying in these foreign or international institutions derives from the material conditions of these institutions and their services as well as from the unique position they have offered these students in financial terms (with scholarships covering their living costs and accommodation needs) which have allowed them to have the time to concentrate on their intellectual development. Also relations among student, faculty, administrators and support staff are significant factors in the success of the international program as a learning opportunity or a form of professional development. These are the conditions which many local universities simply cannot provide.

An explicitly negative view is only present in one account. Artem is not impressed by the level of knowledge of the American teachers he observed, and he is even more shocked by the low quality of American students' factual knowledge (though in another experience he is impressed with the more internationalised faculty in one specific international program located in a neighbouring EU country):

I was not impressed by the knowledge of the teachers and by the knowledge of the students. For example for me, I was surprised that an MA students in International Relations during class thought that Yugoslavia was part of the Soviet Union, and for me it was like, I cannot imagine such things here, that an MA students, its not like a student after school, and in International Relations, therefore my, I am not fascinated by the West. (Artem)

Another set of evaluations is presented by Jakub who is impressed by the quality of students in his first international MA. In his assessment, the student group comprises of the best students from the post-socialist region, whilst he sees students at his second MA degree in the United States as of dubious quality and he does not approve of the widening access agenda at Western universities:

And another thing that I noticed here as far as differences between [European university] and American universities, while I studied in one university but I was taking a course from another university, so I have experience of two universities from there, is that because people are selected, people that come to [European university] are selected by interviewing right, there is tough competition, there is tough competition there [in US] too, but they have whole different, you know quotas and things, you don't understand why people are there, what are they doing there, sometimes a person gets there because of skin colour or this and that, and it's a funny thing. (Jakub)

These very brief more negative or neutral comments point to many more meanings and contradictions than the initial manifested acceptance of interactive teaching would suggest. They uncover the existence of a completely different evaluation of the quality 'benchmarks' of an educational system, perhaps one based on very deep-seated and quite stable convictions that run against the predominant language of student-centeredness and active learning as the required innovations. These views suggest that there is also among the internationalised faculty a more traditional discourse of higher education that is to be based on erudition before any debate or skills training (not tolerating gaps in students' factual knowledge) and a higher education based on elite access of only the very best, the already well-educated students. In other words, many of the interviewees see higher education success less as a result of this or

that pedagogical process (such as interactive teaching or continuous student assessment) but rather as a question of input (of impressive teachers and well prepared students).

In some ways, the academics interviewed are not at all fully accepting some of the tendencies that contribute to the Western pedagogical approaches. The principle of widening participation to non-traditional students is not at all accepted by Jakub in the above evaluation of an American MA program. Similarly, Anastasia acknowledges that the push to have more transferable skills-based education that seems to be demanded by newer generations of students in her home country is not something she is very enthusiastic about. In fact, she sees that as a de-skilling of the classical university teacher in favour of the role of trainer for the market place, resulting in much embarrassment and loss of professional purpose, particularly among older colleagues:

You see, liberal arts means humanitarian trend, the whole idea is that in Russia, I think not only in Russia. Generally, these humanities, the whole discipline is experiencing a kind of crisis because nobody knows how to apply this knowledge, academic knowledge, enlightenment ideas to real life we are living. And so, our colleagues they feel that they are not, requested anymore, their knowledge is not demanded anymore. And we have many clashes with students who, we expect from them high standards of reading, understanding, preparing, and everything. But students, they demonstrate a kind of very, they have an easy approach to their study, compared to our approach, our time for example.

[...] And it embarrasses us very much, at the same time we understand, the head of our department understands very well that we should fit the whole changing situation. If we are in the market, we should give students what they want to get. (Anastasia)

These views are only signalled in very few interviews in relation to teaching (very likely caused partly by the interviewer being constructed by some of the interviewees as ‘a teaching methods person’ standing for the more student-centred approach) but they will also be somewhat noticeable in evaluations of policy that will be discussed in the next chapter.

Perhaps the most interesting perspective on the teaching and learning issues developed through internationalisation, is the very presence of the comparative perspective on higher education rather than the technical take-up of specific methods. The ability to pinpoint differences was stated in nearly all interviews as an important intellectual acquisition and, in the majority of cases this comparison amounted to a decisively negative view of the institutional practices in their own educational contexts.

The comparative perspective as translated into practice is most directly exemplified by Artur’s description of his individual style of teaching, based on at least three ‘national’ approaches to a group of students experienced in home and foreign educational settings, stemming directly from his hybrid multi-national academic identity:

Well, I like the American tradition best, because of the interactive side of it, the informal side of it. So I really, I am in any way like an American teacher, because I am always laid back, I always involve interactive methods, if I have a large audience, then I use games and I use some methods [to make it interactive]. If I have a small group, 10-15 people then I don’t do this. Then I concentrate with them. [The college] is good because ideally we have small groups. And generally the American tradition tries to work for the worst students in the class, and the French tradition and the Russian tradition they work for the best students in the class, and I am somewhere in the middle. I cannot make myself work for the worst students in the class, I can be quite complicated, if I have a

new idea I want to share, I share it, but at the same time, I am making an effort in making the middle of the class see and push the people a little bit. (Artur)

The benefits of the comparative perspective are felt also in Lukas's description of completely different but equally valuable teaching approaches experienced in two different international educational contexts:

In Belgium it was more traditional, it is a Catholic university and the courses there were more formal. At [European university] we were under the close guidance of our supervisors and it was more family-like atmosphere, but in Belgium there are lots of students, there was no such personal relationship with the lecturer, and the courses were larger. So there you have the relationship to the professor as conveyer of knowledge, not a personal one. The courses were less interactive as well. I told you the story when a professor was delivering a lecture and American students were raising their hands and he even did not respond to them until he finished what he wanted to say. But the level of studies was very high in [Belgian University]. I benefited a lot from it. (Lukas)

In general, it is very hard to generalise about the extent to which the internationalisation experience is a source of concrete teaching approaches, but it can clearly be seen as changing and enlarging the available set of perspectives on what can be done in different classroom settings with different courses and sets of students. This new perspective derives directly from the exposure to other systems and other preferred pedagogical concerns or approaches, and in some cases it leads to an understanding that a larger repertoire of methods is at the teacher's disposal. However, the possibilities of implementing these approaches vary and can lead to problematic situations in the local context. This aspect of the internationalisation effect on the teacher's local positioning will be explored further in the subsequent chapter.

7.4 Effects on the perception of professional relationships with colleagues and administrators.

The majority of the meanings generated by the experiences of internationalization as reported by the interviewed academics related to the basic two dimensions of their working life: research and teaching. However, internationalization would also generate views about related relationships among academics, such as the relations between supervisors and supervisees or relations among colleagues in disciplinary associations that provide a structure of professional socialisation and career advancement. There was a shared recognition among the interviewees about the materially and culturally different organization of the collegial relationships in Western or international contexts as opposed to their own home environments. As in the case of research and teaching, the Western approaches were not only identified as different but also as better or more desirable than the local established cultures which were often perceived as deficient in some way.

One aspect of the perceived difference related to academic practice was a better working atmosphere or better working relationships among academics, either in terms of relationships between supervisors and young researchers or relationships within academic groups. The experiences of working with a supervisor or a set of senior academics in the program abroad amounted to an alternative vision of professional conduct and professional work practices that were readily taken up as their own by some of the interviewees. This means that this area of

experience also translates directly to the creation of the individualised and internationalised academic self.

I, just, they [the lecturers], for me they made the reaching of this academic market clearer. Looking at them, how they act, how they ground their arguments, for instance, how they refer to other theories, how they teach to work with different theories. I think they were less doctrinaire then people in [Belorussian city]. [...] but they were not sticking to, like there are people in [the city] that stick to just one theoretical paradigm and try to explain everything through this theoretical paradigm. (Emil)

And it was a very pleasant experience of working with teachers who do not think of you as one of many but perceive you as an individual student and try to help you with your very personal topic of research, a very personal understanding of what is going on. I thought that I get something very important here. (Sofia)

Some of the academics equated their own subsequent preference for working on the international level or within an international group of researchers as a direct consequence of such positive working experiences abroad:

[...] I have quite a lot of friends I am working with, from different research projects, they are my good friends. Yeah, but not from my university, they are Czech, Ukrainian, different ages also, some are eight years, ten years older than me, and still it's ...Its like for instance, some Czech guy, my good friend, now he is doing research in the same settings as I do with different research problem so sometimes we just call each other and say, we need to rent a flat in this city for five days, lets try to do it together so it would be cheaper and we would meet. (Emil)

It seemed that the experience of internationalization gave some interviewees a vision of a collegial, collaborative and supportive disciplinary community in which they felt they were readily invited to participate. For these academics, internationalization became equated with

an important additional dimension in their own work, perceived as a kind of ‘lifeline’ of access to vital material and human resources in their field, or became part of their preferred style of working and of their personal life (friendships), something they would continue to do when placed in their own local context.

In many cases, the vision of the collegiality, equality and professionalism of academic exchange (at conferences, in meetings with supervisor) made the academics evaluate their own professional networks at home as unprofessional, and many had described concrete situations or pervasive problems of professional conduct they either experienced directly or observed. Anton’s narrative is particularly full of such accusations of professional shortcomings, set against experiences of more beneficial relationship with colleagues during his stay in Germany. Tamar’s and Daria’s narrative also provide some evidence of similar views:

It’s really different, you know in Bulgaria they are trying to ruin you, at a conference, if you compare feedback. In Germany they are giving you feedback and commenting with ideas that will help you with these comments and question and feedback, but in Bulgaria, now I have the feeling it’s in Eastern Europe as a whole, they are trying to put as mean questions as, for you to feel ashamed and to look stupid and things like that. So it’s really different atmosphere of working, like tolerance of topics and sharing between colleagues, and helping colleagues. In Bulgaria, because of lack on information, people are hiding information. That’s the biggest problem in higher education in Bulgaria, [...] like there is no collaboration at all, almost no collaboration at all. And there is no ethics of citing or quoting your colleagues, like there is huge level of plagiarism and things like that. [...] In Germany it’s the other way around, and I appreciate it. (Anton)

And there is where I found out that research needs a space, and research is not done for itself but it's done to share your findings with some other people and to get their feedback. Still when I was doing my PhD I had a presentation in Rome for this psychology congress, and I presented my results and I said this is how I got this, and that is why it is like this, but I got this and I don't know why it is like this, and I had questions. And there was this French guy who told me, you need to do this and this and that and it might give you a clearer picture or bring some more fruitful results. [...] Georgian people wouldn't have been able to tell the same, to give the same advice let's say because they simply didn't know. One, or maybe there were a couple of people who did know but maybe they did not have time or space to read these things and to tell me. But when I put all these things into my dissertation and when I had a defence of this dissertation and I said these things, the head of this committee who is still regarded as one of the best representatives of the field and so on, he said, 'Oh, why are you saying that? You are very silly to say these things because it means that you made some mistakes and this guy corrected you', and so [he] completely did not understand what was the whole process about. And that again shows difference, in attitudes. (Tamar)

Clearly, the observed level of collaboration within a department and the style of communication in academic events such as conferences in the foreign contexts is perceived as more beneficial for their own professional development, something that helps their research and builds their confidence as professionals.

The views of academic community developed by the interviewees seem somewhat exaggerated in their positive assessment of their Western colleagues' professional relationships, based on the principle of collegiality. It is difficult to speculate why such strongly positive perceptions were present; it is possible that as students or temporary guests, these academics rarely experienced genuine conflicts and were shielded from some of the real life politics and conflicting discourses that might be going on 'backstage' at an academic

institution or in a research group. It is equally possible that interacting in a foreign language and culture helped mask some of the likely issues of conflict and power differentials.

More significantly, these positive constructions of academic practice in the Western contexts were often juxtaposed to an account of relationships within the disciplinary or institutional network in the home country, which were being reported as less professional or less helpful ways of working with other academics. Some of the problems identified in this respect were very serious indeed, making the Western collegial networks appear positively exemplary by comparison. The interviewed academics sometimes made a direct accusation of corruption on many levels, inherent favouritism, nepotism, or even sexism (the last directly named as such only in one interview).

These perceptions amounted to an overall evaluation of the home academic profession as lacking certain basic professional standards of interaction. The identified principles of academic practice included impartial or objective evaluation of another's work, the principle of sharing information or resources with colleagues and giving constructive and supportive feedback. These were perceived as missing or inadequately widespread among the local-national academic networks.

For example, Daria's account dedicated much space to what she saw as inherently more neutral relationship with colleagues and supervisors in the Western context.

I think that this period of education is very important because when you are coming from abroad you are used to first of all very different relations between academic community, nobody asks what is your background, parents,

gender, your social position and here it is always part of the discourse, this social position, ethnic background, gender background, everything matters. When you want to talk to people on academic level and then you realise it is not only on academic level, for example you go to a conference and quite often you can be commented on as female person mainly. 'Thank you that this nice girl prepared something very interesting for us', you feel like you are invited to entertain someone, not to share some scientific ideas, it appears that you are supposed to entertain someone. And it is very strange, especially when you come [from abroad] because then you are used to [different practices], but because you are from here you do acquire this way of communication. (Daria)

In her understanding, the neutrality of interaction was caused by a certain 'bracketing' of issues of class, gender, or ethnicity, location which she thought was occurring in her conversations with Western supervisors or colleagues. What is more, that relationship for her as a female and relatively young academic had a clear sexist element, from Daria's point of view verging on sexual harassment, which was read as 'natural' part of cultural interactions in the local context. All these added dimensions, which had been bracketed off in her relationship with her Western (UK) supervisor, had to come to the foreground when she started integrating with the local academic networks.

Clearly, the interviewed academics were trying to translate these more discipline or profession-specific observations into currency they could somehow use for their own career progression, and to build a coherent vision of their own academic style and identity. There was a definite sense of the Western academic profession being an object of admiration or idealisation and a source for personal value re-orientation.

Not all academics interviewed viewed the local academic relationships as of a worse quality; some did not comment on this aspect of their academic life at all, and a few clearly had much

more positive experiences and felt well integrated into their own academic contexts, perhaps because they perceived these contexts as reform oriented, or because they managed to adapt back to the local cultural expectations.

What makes such adaptations of practice possible in some contexts needs to be studied in more detail and this discussion will occur in the next chapter dealing with the perceptions of policy change.

7.5 Summary of findings regarding internationalisation in academic practice.

The range of areas in which internationalisation affected the ways of being an academic included, first and foremost, disciplinary knowledge and research skills, to a lesser extent the practices of research writing and publishing, curriculum and program design, the range of teaching approaches and the organization of student learning at university as well as the understanding of professional conduct and professional relationships. The comparative views on different education systems, traditions and practices were usually derived from a specific positioning as a students (and a graduate student) or a guest in the foreign context, which may explain why some aspects of academic practice were somewhat idealised whereas others were not acquired to the same extent. Most of the meanings derived were being continuously used in building a sense of professional identity and of specific value re-orientation as an internationalised academic, which were often put in juxtaposition to local values and approaches, often resulting in disappointment with or critique of the home institutional setting.

In other words, in nearly all the interviewees there was some effect of internationalisation on how the academic profession was conceived and how one should act in this sphere as a professional. Of course, we cannot know from the interviews, beyond the academics self-reports of practice, to what extent these views could be or were possible to 'operationalise' on a daily basis in their own work with their students, or colleagues. Some of the interviewees reported concrete practices identified as Western as their own lived practice, whereas those placed in more conservative contexts reported them as 'a struggle against the odds'. It is also possible to see how these academics continually had to merge the Western and the local ways of doing things in order to thrive in the local conditions. Nevertheless, these views were used by some of the interviewers as important currency in building their own potential for action in their own contexts, or even for the reform of their own educational system. This general orientation to reform based on the currency of knowledge about Western higher education system is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 8: The meanings of internationalisation for academics' attitudes towards university reform.

This chapter presents another set of qualitative data derived partially from the life narratives themselves and partially from the answers generated by additional interview questions. Additional questions were asked following the life story interview in order to gain academics' views on their institutional context as a reforming or transforming institution and their evaluation of the whole national higher education system as a system under reform or transformation. This chapter will be concerned with eliciting how internationalised academics view their educational system and its institutions and their perceptions of the extent to which they feel they can participate in the processes of its reform, transformation or re-invention.

All the educational systems represented here are formally taking part in trans-national reform agendas, in particular, through the Bologna process (dividing the curriculum into two cycles of education, reinventing curricular, accreditation processes, introducing innovations such as credits, beginning international collaboration) and all have undergone profound changes in the transition period. On the other hand, the countries are characterised by a very strong ambivalence towards reform agendas. The educational system is usually centralised and profoundly bureaucratic. Furthermore, the academic lobbies consisting of powerful rectors and senior academics at the oldest and most prestigious institutions are also very strong and often able to directly influence the shape of the ministry action, assuring a continuation of

their and their universities' status as leaders or templates for what a successful higher education institution should look like. Into this situation enter international foundations, like my own Open Society Foundations network, that provide varied selective resources to those institutions and individuals/programs that are willing to innovate and develop other educational approaches, most often based on collaboration with or adaptations from Western institutional and educational practice. My interest in this chapter is to see how internationalised faculty in my sample view this battlefield of ideas and influences over the shape and direction of reform.

The chapter below continues to answer the second research question: *What are the effects of internationalisation on the academic's understanding of the professional practice, policy change and their position in higher education?*

The starting point for my analysis were excerpts of the interviews that referred to evaluation of ongoing institutional change or systemic change, and those that referred to the academics' own positioning in these processes.

8.1. The narrative of distancing oneself from the local.

As was the case with previously reported (in chapter 6) academics' definitions of what constitutes the state of their discipline or the standard of professional practice in research, teaching and academic collaboration, the internationalized academics had very strong views about the local reform process at their own institutions. For them, internationalisation was the

source of a comparative perspective that gave them a position from which they could formulate a personal critique of their institutions. The more distant the local institutional culture and educational process was perceived/remembered to be from those newly acquired 'international standards', the more negative was the academic's evaluation of it.

In several interviews a process of distancing oneself from the local or original institutional context was very strong, and was a key element of the individualisation process, and the topic of failed reforms was a favourite subject upon which such a distance was built. Such strongly negative evaluations of institutional processes were presented by Artem in relation to teaching practices which they perceived as unreformed (despite attempts to introduce new approaches being discursively established as desirable by the university management). Artem describes a rise of discourse of interactive teaching that is slowly entering the national institutions but which is meaningless to the majority of academics, resulting in little or no change of practice:

Now we talk about the interactive methods of teaching but nobody does it. As it used to be at lectures teachers speak and everybody is silent and the seminars the lecturer is silent, everyone speaks. We have the same. So in my personal opinion nothing changes. (Artem)

This points to the international experience being used to continue building a specific individual identity as a reform minded academic and of taking the position of the informed practitioner, distinguishable from the localised 'others'- regular faculty and managers. This discourse of 'othering' the local academics is clearly shown by another excerpt from Katerina who also describes another failed innovation- the invention of the course syllabus which manages to generate confusion and more additional work for faculty who see this as a

pointless exercise, as do the administrators. As a result, course syllabi are produced but they are still not made available to students at all, therefore negating their very purpose:

And the other thing with our program, in our specialist's program, we call our [study] programs 'programs'. But for the bachelor's program we call them 'syllabus'. So, it's just a different name, and the professors are really confused, why should we call the programs differently, but they don't really understand the syllabus is something you give to the students, and the students should just have it, so the students don't get the syllabus at the beginning of the course and it is still kept somewhere at the department, so most of the professors just don't understand, like, what it is for? (Katerina).

There is a strong sense in the interview of a critique focused on centralised impositions of educational practice by managers but there is also a strong evaluation of regular rank and file lecturers as uninformed regarding the real purpose of a specific innovation. It is also clear that the interviewed academics derive the educational innovations from the Western pedagogical practice, and they position themselves as practitioners who understand the educational principles behind these practices.

The discourse of distancing oneself from home institutional contexts and of perceiving their local colleagues as the problematic 'others' is an outcome of these academics' internationalisation experiences. It is particularly visible when the moment of returning or the period after returning from abroad is the subject of the narrative. The biographical logic of some of these narratives is of a progressing process of individualisation/internationalisation which is threatened by the local conservative context and becomes a difficult project to carry out.

Davit has negative views about his original undergraduate program, as simply of very low quality in terms of the curriculum and the level of teachers and students alike. In his narrative, we see an overall rejection of the entire educational system (based on his own experience of it in comparison with the international MA program in which he had participated).

If you would ask me about the quality of education at my institution I might be critical about this because, I mean linguistically that university in which I graduated that (name) university, the linguistic part is more or less okay, but the social science and the history is a failure. Not accidentally, they closed down that department there. Not accidentally, because I think they realized they are not producing any serious thing. I think the only exception in of my department was my year who somehow could at least produce some mediocre specialists in history. (Davit)

From this narrative we can see the sense of also distancing oneself from one's own past which is now labelled as wasted time or lost time, and it is interesting how this narrative matches very well larger societal narratives of the communist past as a wasted period of history, as a period that needs to be left behind and forgotten because it has nothing to offer in terms of identity building.

The other aspect of the distancing narrative (and related to it the identity narrative of an informed practitioner) is the very particular usage of the metaphor of opening and closing of societies/worldviews or the metaphor of centre-periphery or urban-rural which was present in several of the interviewees' evaluations of their home educational system.

On a much broader geographical level, an international point of reference as a benchmark for judging the success or failure of the home educational system in transition is also used by

Julius. In his assessment, Georgian reform processes can be measured by international comparisons to those countries that are perceived as closer to the West European standards; he states very clearly that only these countries should be a benchmark for Georgian higher education system reform (as opposed to the immediate neighbours who are perceived as less advanced in the reform process and therefore not worthy of comparison):

Of course I am very critical of our education system but if you see, [...] because I know that we can do more, Georgians can do more, but when I see and I hear what is happening in Armenia and Azerbaijan, when they still have this Soviet system and they don't have even started any reform or something and there is corruption in the university [...] But we want more, we want not to compare with Azerbaijan but with Lithuania, Poland or something. We have another level of demand, that's the thing absolutely. (Julius 10)

Although Julius's internationalisation experiences in education were based in the US, he is able to use a regional comparison in which some former socialist countries are perceived as further to the West and closer to Western economic and political systems. In this excerpt, there is a desire to almost displace the country out of its current regional location (in Caucasus) and to bring it geographically closer to the 'New EU' states. In this case, the comparison of higher education reform process is seen as part and parcel of larger socio-political transformation towards Western and European structures and away from the post-soviet legacy. Internationalisation clearly translates itself into a desire for Westernisation, following the example of the other countries seen as 'winners' of the capitalist transformation.

The home educational system is most vividly pictured as a provincial or peripheral society in Davit's narrative of the Armenian academia as 'a remote village' and of Western academia as 'a metropolis':

This is the thing of being proud like in a village. In a remote village, they think they are the most clever. And being not very much exposed to the outer world, they are sure in it, and sometimes like programs like [an international fellowship for local faculty] are bothering them saying: there is outer world; there is the city out there, community. And sometimes of course they can get not very good things about the city, cultural phenomenon, the city is the degradation of morals, to some point that's truth. Like in the village they can leave the door open, there's virtually no theft... but you need to look at the city more globally. It is the place where people are situated more closely to each other, they interchange ideas, communications are accelerated and it helps society to develop. (Davit)

These metaphors allow these academics to build an aspect of identity central to becoming an internationalised professional (and an internationalised individual): the sense of oneself as primarily a cosmopolitan actor oriented outwards to other educational and socio-political/cultural contexts or integrated into larger centres of knowledge exchange.

It has to be noted that these metaphors and the overall discourse are not just a linguistic construction; they help give meaning to the accompanying material experiences of distance and lack of resources and the material limitations of some of the universities as places of day to day work and life. There were definitely many underdeveloped, understaffed, relatively traditional and resource-poor universities in those contexts, particularly in the 1990s and early 2000s. The difficulties are also manifest in the very needs of constructing or redesigning curricula and degree programs in social science and humanities, so the internationalised

faculty perceive themselves as having had direct material access to resources, ideas, knowledge and practices that are genuinely needed to build the university programs in which they work. But the other purpose of these orientations, is the building of a new scale of comparison in higher education, with centres of prestige located much beyond the national flagship universities.

8.2 Narrative of failed reform management.

What is more interesting than simply the formation of very negative evaluations of either one's own original educational institution or of the whole higher education system, are the reasons these academics perceive as responsible for system failure or lack of progress in reforming, and how they see their own position in this situation.

Several interviewees suggested in their interviews that the traditional educational institutions were characterised by a certain inertia caused by a combination of inflexible and dominant central leadership and lack of genuine understanding of, or genuine support for, the desired policy agenda among the rank and file academics.

Behind the discourse of mismanagement is the underlying problem of inability to adequately voice, describe and negotiate the changes institutionally and to give them real local meaning.

This was already visible in Katerina's narrative quoted above, but she makes references to several other failed transformations of this sort imposed by the university administration. She

paints a vivid picture of central administration as stopping any meaningful reform by imposing changes on confused faculty without any attempt at a clear explanation or negotiation of what these changes would mean and how they would relate to actual teaching needs of faculty:

So, I think that the system is still too centralized. Because if somebody from the top, from the administration of the university says; like 'OK, right now, we have to do this midterm testing'. And the whole department runs, all the professors are doing those tests, and no one even thinks whether we really need that, or we don't need that. Well, 'Ok our Dean says we have to do so we'll do that'. Just, you know, we are trying to be good professors, we just have to do that. But there's not much understanding. And most of the professors I would say they have no idea what Bologna process is. Absolutely no understanding of that. (Katerina)

[...]

So, I think that the faculty was the first one, and it was the only one that had the bachelors program in the nineties. And right now of course, many other faculties have this. But it seems to me that those changes they carry more technical character, like the bachelor's program it is the same specialist degree program, just a little bit restructured, in terms that maybe there are less hours that are developed to each specific class. But that was the only change, and that's why we are experiencing a problem in structuring our master's program right now at the department, because we don't know what to teach at the master's level. (Katerina)

Katrina's many examples of a rushed and top-down implementation of multiple formal educational reforms is significant in as much as it represents a very widespread narrative of 'window-dressing reform' which instead of preserving local good practice and introducing structurally and locally-meaningful reform, amounts to a de-facto lowering of educational standards.

In a less negative vein, Jakub thinks the university is implementing reforms that have only a formal significance (at least so far) and Tamar believes that the problem lies in lack of adequate explanation and negotiation (or training) of staff in what a particular reform process would entail for university practice:

Yeah, it's a big mess I would say. We are moving forward but with smaller steps than one would wish, especially the students. I would say, OK we are doing all these reforms that look fine on the paper but it has not reached students yet. (Jakub)

Yes, in most cases this is like this, they say 'we are shifting to introducing major and minor to our students' and that's all. That said, they think it's enough. But now after two years they found out there are students with no minor at all because nobody told them how to connect the minor hours. So simply saying on the paper that we are introducing a major and minor, it doesn't mean anything. You need to train some people, you make some documents, and you need to tell the students how to do that. But they never think about this. (Tamar)

A similar example was Tamar's evaluation of the continuous lack of substantial research output at universities (supposedly the sites of increasing research orientation) in a system that still had the academy of science model in place (which used to concentrate research production and contributed to at least partial separation between teaching and research between the academy and the university):

Actually I think this tradition of separating research and teaching is somehow still there, because somehow the academy is still active, although there are talks about merging these two things. But very slowly this is creeping in. And kind of, the university, these decision makers, on the one hand, they want us to do research, but on the

other hand, they don't think about any conditions we need to do research, and don't think about anything to support us in doing research? (Tamar)

Much of the mismanagement narrative above focuses on miscommunication and the resulting lack of understanding of the concepts behind the reform, concepts that these internationalised faculty consider to be quite clear to them, since they have personally observed or experienced these sort of educational structures or practices. Interestingly, although only a few of the interviewees are in any sort of middle management position, they identify some of the failures of early reform as being due to lack of managerial know-how among university decision-makers. They also identify a lack of bottom up communication and, as a result, discipline-specific needs and perceptions of programs or practices are not being understood by the reformers. In the views of these internationalised academics the effects of the top down sweeping changes were formal adoptions of structures resulting in an equal amount of resistance or confusion on the part of students as well as professors.

In another interview, Sofia simply points out that the reform related to the quality of educational provision or reform of the degree curriculum has often been the last thing on the agenda of university leadership who have had more immediate concerns such as very low funding for the university's core functions of teaching (or rather providing salary for professors in order to be able to have functioning programs). This would have been particularly visible in the 1990s when in Russia and other post-soviet countries the central funding for universities was greatly diminished or lost value due to the rapid economic changes resulting in a situation of a deep crisis. So, many reforms were being undertaken in

conditions in which they are more then likely to fail because the university has more vital aspects of its survival to attend to.

Apart from that the administration system at the universities is very poor and the workers are involved in solving financial problems for the university and they do not think about content of study programs. (Sofia)

The internationalised faculty build their own position as sympathetic to the misinformed rank and file professors and they themselves may also be discouraged at such attempts at reform, or with their own inability to take part in making meaningful change. This frustration around lack of progress is particularly strongly expressed by those returning academics in well-established institutions who were teaching assistants, that is postgraduate students with a full time teaching position but relative lack of standing in their departments, or those who whilst already possessing their first doctorate were not close to the decision making processes and roles in their departments. The disappointment at having no agency in bringing the message of alternative educational practice home is experienced very strongly by Robert, in language suggestive of a strong and defeated reform orientation:

When I came back I felt that I don't fit anymore to my chair [department] and that perspective that was given to me there was not interesting in that time. I mean everything was, not collapsing, but I felt that this department is too anachronistic and they don't do anything to develop and if I proposed something, 'lets do this, lets do that', it was only a cry, a single cry in the desert. I did not see any reason to stay. (Robert)

Katerina displays a more detached attitude in noting the slow progress towards reform in her current institution, but not even attempting to take part in the process of negotiation or debate:

Frankly speaking, I don't see much change going on. Maybe it's because I'm not really involved in those administrative issues, I'm not exactly involved in designing programs, and I just, when we have those departmental meetings, of course I hear some things (Katerina)

These academics still feel capable of introducing change in their personal practice (to some extent) and they are clearly more than ready to share their evaluative perspectives on the state of reform at various institutions with others. However, they feel they find themselves in institutions that are structurally not oriented towards institutional reform and in some cases, they feel the need to leave and seek another institutional setting, even at a cost of breaking a disciplinary development trajectory.

8.3 The construction of the reformer identity.

The willingness with which these internationalised academics discuss such difficulties of policy change points out to another aspect of the construction of the internationalised and individualised academic identity- the desire and desirability of agentive involvement in the reform process or of building one's sense of academic identity and practice in opposition to the majority of academics and administrators.

This institutional position is built on the realisation of one's own practice as alternative/better and one's knowledge as that of the more informed practitioner. These academics' input into the reform process often concerns the central matters related to individual academic practice, for example, the way they conceptualise and deliver the curriculum in their discipline and

program. This updating of the curriculum may occur even in more traditional locations, simply by virtue of the faculty member choosing a different approach to the course or the curriculum.

Sofia, for instance, strongly asserts that internationalised faculty like her fill an important gap in educational structures, by giving students a more international learning experience in terms of Western disciplinary content and wider international network in the discipline:

Most people who teach at our department, they do not go abroad very frequently, they mostly stay in one kind of context, one kind of environment all the time, they focus on the subject that they teach and they do not waste time on academic travelling and something like this. I am different in a way that students like my seminars, students like my lectures because I always bring some new ideas that usually teachers who were brought up in Russia, they usually do not bring. So for example, many teachers use mainly Russian language sources. When I prepare lectures I use mainly English language sources and in this way the information that we give is different. (Sofia)

In Lukas's narrative, the push for greater specialisation and greater depth in the curriculum comes from his new workplace which is a new university whose management is pursuing an agenda of building up new or alternative curricula. This is one area of change into which internationalised faculty can contribute very much and which brings them greater sense of achievement and job satisfaction. This focus on the curriculum, in his assessment, contributes to the institution becoming more vibrant and market oriented.

I just develop new courses. Now this was not the case in the older system, every professor had the courses set, and so there was no push to make new things, and I am pushed all the time to create new courses. Now I created

few new syllabi, new courses, I shall now teach three novel courses which I never taught before. And for me it's also a kind of little bit *terra incognita* in the sense that I am myself challenged to do these courses. So sometime, some of these sources require me to, it's not like a sponge and put your finger on it and it leaks with knowledge. No, myself, I have to learn many things through teaching this course and that is why it's challenging for me. Actually the situation became more vibrant now, less static. In a way more market oriented also. Even in very humanitarian disciplines, like in detached historical, philosophical subjects, you have to show students why it's important, and what value, what market value this education has. (Lukas)

In this and many similar narratives of individual educational practice derived from the international background and experience of the academic (discussed in the previous chapter) we can see the formation of a distinct reformer identity. It is also interesting that innovation is strongly linked to the partial advance of 'academic capitalist' discourse (Slaughter 1997) pointing to marketisation or commodification of university education, where the concern with employability and market value of degrees has to be translated into how individual courses are put together and advertised to students.

What becomes very visible in the majority of the interviews is that because these academics saw themselves as possessing a different skill set than either their local contemporaries or their older colleagues, they also believed themselves to be capable of introducing, or at least of articulating, significant changes. Their international experiences of Western (Anglo-Saxon as a rule) institutions provide them with a particular, if not complete, view of what an idealised, well-functioning institution should look like.

The knowledge is not only about teaching practices or relevant disciplinary content but about the nature of the Western educational system, in particular knowledge of what the first two

cycles of university education mean in terms of the curriculum design, content, methods of teaching, etc. In other words, the internationalised faculty in certain institutional contexts, could quite easily position themselves as experts, even at the very beginning of their academic career.

In two positive accounts of relative success at transforming the institutional setting, Lukas and Artur report the appropriate direction of reform and clearly identify with their institution, or feel co-responsible for the process.

So, it's a good process that elective courses, there is a greater emphasis and also, how to say, lecturers are pushed to make their lectures more attractive. That is why we create good syllabi, not only to show what the course is about, and to show it to students 'this and this we shall learn and this will be the outcome'. The students themselves became more kind of practical and market oriented, then they were in Soviet Union times when the education was too much, I would say, soft and I don't know how to say, formless or shapeless somehow. (Lukas)

Ah, of course it is positive, we work on it, it could be better, we were improving it. There is difference in the motivation of the students themselves. But yes, how to say, we are quite capable of producing really good people, for this we need more curriculum adjustment, more work methodologically and we do this all the time. (Artur 5)

Jakub, on the other hand, perceives his department, located in a big state university, as only slowly adapting and developing. Here reform is more of a question of time, but progress is slowly visible and there is also a sense of personal and collegial investment in the process, as signified by the use of the collective personal pronoun 'we'. The process relates to formal attempts to hire new faculty, using different criteria for selection and hiring structures, in

order to gain access to specialists who would be capable of constructing a new, better curriculum:

So now we want to overcome this stage, not only, on the level of assistant professor but also on the level of associate professor, and full professors, So when we are through this process that we have right people and these people can teach right courses, then we can say that reform is over, and we can look at impact on students, how better are students now at job market or at academic activities, and things like that, because then they would have qualitatively different curriculum to cover. This is the situation right now. (Jakub)

The strongest or most articulated reformer identity is supplied by Gabriel's narrative.

He explicitly and repeatedly acknowledges himself as an active agent in the process of rethinking institutional policy as part of creation of a new university. What makes his position quite unique and what makes the opportunity ripe for action is his position of vice-dean of faculty which, although a hard task to fulfil, allows him to have more of a voice and a sense of personal importance in the running of the university:

The vice-dean is just an administrative position, but still a position that gives me the freedom of action and space and makes me have a certain immunity, not to, you know, it is not so easy to attack me and contest what I am saying but I am, I am not enjoying this position from administrative point of view, on the contrary, I, in many respects it is a heavy burden but I, I accept this position because it offers me space for professional action, in my professional field to be able to make a contribution, for instance, the thing we discussed in the morning about curriculum development about [...] project about research, about setting up a centre for regional studies and so on. If I am not in the right position I cannot make a contribution, it is possible that my voice wouldn't be heard or it would not be respected. (Gabriel 4)

(...) So there is a real generational gap here, very few people are like myself who, and even you know, and even myself I am not fully formed during the post communist system, because my career had some interruptions, but

despite these interruptions because of my period of study and research in the West, I, you know, I am in the position to a start, to be a catalyst of some positive changes. (Gabriel).

Gabriel's assessment of himself as a reformer in higher education is very clearly a direct consequence of his internationalisation and this is an experience that makes him special and potentially valuable policy agent.

8.4 The narrative of “othering” of the older academic generation.

An integral part of the reformer identity is the distinction between the internationalised academics and the non-internationalised practitioners who become ‘the other’ in this process of academic identity construction.

Several well-developed narratives concerned the critique of the older or established academic workforce- usually seen in negative terms as of low academic quality and corrupted by the values of the previous system, but still able to command a high degree of influence. The biggest perceived problem with these older academics was their central position in university power structures which, combined with their unwillingness to learn new skills or update their disciplinary knowledge, amounted to a creation of powerful agents that would actively try to stop any change that would go against their own interests. Davit describes a head of an institute as one such typical academic oligarch:

But the very relations with the management when they are spoiled, and everything is based on personal not professional relations. There you have a problem. [...]

And after that I came to realize that people of the type of my boss there [director of an institute of the academy of science], he wasn't that unique. The whole field is filled with people like him, who act and think as if it's like, this institution is his field, his manor and he's doing whatever he pleases, because it's his. (Davit)

Gabriel, on the other hand, sees a problem with a specific generation of low quality academics who managed to reach senior positions during the transition period and who, being less academically prepared and less capable of serious research, lower the standards of the whole profession, whilst older academics no longer feel they have much stake in the reform process:

But there are different kinds of people here, you know, one can get inside various groups of academics. One group is formed by people, by elderly people from, you know from the generation who spent the main, the main part of their life during communism. And also then, they were not involved in the academic field but in other fields, and they joined the academic field only after 1990. And they were not able, most of them were not able to rise to the standards, to the normal standards and therefore if it is a disadvantage the fact that they are still here in such a large number. The second group is formed by outside academics who are coming from [bigger cities] and who are real academics but they are elder and they are not so much motivated to change this particular institution because anyway they spend here only short period of time and they are close to become pensioners, to become retired. (Gabriel)

Several such narratives of anachronistic but powerful professors are given by Alexei, again constructed very directly in contrast with their Western colleagues:

At the university, and also at the academy, there was this professor, he died now, but he was seventy eight and he was still the professor and editor in chief and he was sleeping during the discussions, I mean it's incredible, but you cannot move him from this position. He is retired and he has a one year contract but they are renewing his contract every year because the scientific board, that he is a member of this board, is renewing this contract. For

me that is a conflict of interests, but nobody cares. The people who are there are voting for themselves to stay longer, of course they will stay longer, nobody wants to lose money and to be out of the picture, sure. (Alexei)

The old professors are not qualified to work with computer. Maybe you will laugh but when I went to Germany and saw these old professors typing, in Bulgaria they have an assistant, they don't type by themselves, they do not switch on the computer, they are receiving email due to their assistants. And the same with [writing] books - they are not typing them and they have translators for their books. In Germany they have an editor which is OK because nobody is a native speaker, my English is not perfect but [in Bulgaria] it's different, it's crazy, if you have a special translator to translate his books or to translate books and articles for him. (Alexei)

These narratives portray the profession as unreformable because the older academics can command enough personal influence through having access to key resources or positions of power, and as a result, they can actively marginalise the internationalised colleagues' reform aspirations.

In Robert's narrative, the older generation is characterised by narrow-mindedness and an anti-international (anti-Western) perspective in which local and older ways of doing things are felt as more natural and better than the foreign influences on the younger (and especially on the internationalised) academics. Robert does not have such a strong negative evaluation of these individuals as a group able to stop development, but he dismisses them as well-meaning older teachers who simply are incapable of understanding the more 'global', contemporary perspective (again his location in global academic space is very explicit here):

Yes because these older people, I love them, I like them, I mean it's part of our culture, but they do not know how to proceed, they do not know how to develop this. I mean at the academy where I taught, because the

university, is a bit different system, they don't speak other languages, they don't go abroad very much, they are concentrated on the local issues and they believe that what they do is the best. They don't see the environment, they don't see what is around. How can you change something when you don't know where you go. And then you tell them, come on guys this is more like nineteenth century education, then it's nothing, they say you are infected with American ideas, you know, the capitalists sponsor you. They do not understand it, and they do not want to understand it. (Robert)

Here, the main aspect of the older academics' mindset is their own lack of internationalisation (lack of foreign language skills, inability to understand foreign educational systems, a distrust of the Western ideas). This is supported by using metaphors around seeing (or blindness to what is around the country context) and the spatial metaphors (travelling) which reinforce the evaluation of localised academics as uninformed about more broad trends in academia. At the same time, the internationalised reform-oriented academics are reported as being perceived as threat to the local, 'normal' ways of acting, and as foreign irritants in the still traditional and local system.

The strongest articulated negative charge against 'the others' was that of widespread corruption and nepotism caused by the hierarchical relationships of power leading to the formation of a specific academic oligarchy and to a kind of conflict of academic generations.

This point of the comparison was made explicitly by Sergei.

Well, I am not an expert in that field because I did not see that dynamics in the 90s I was mostly in the US [...] The bad thing is that the financing is not too good. It's not always transparent. All this transparency, comparing, overall comparing with the American system which is pretty transparent, right, though with some politics, when

I say [this to colleagues in Russia], people say 'no, it couldn't be that way', of course, if you are a PhD from Yale and Princeton, of course you have an upper hand but still, I worked in a promotion and hiring committee, you know the whole system kind of works, you know you try to get whatever. (Sergei)

Direct removal of older academics from powerful positions and change of generations were often seen as necessary to provide space for more innovative and less corrupt practices and policy:

Basically I am afraid that the only and the most important thing which will not be done is the personnel change because there is no rotation of personnel, people with ideas that were running the higher education in eighties and seventies are continuing. And even if these people are put in charge of liberal education or I don't know American style education, the result would be the same, or it would be even worse, because they don't know how to do that at all, so yeah. If I were the president I would sack all the deans and the rectors of the state institutions and put there scholars with the experience of Western academia. This may be snobbish but it's the main problem I do see. (Artur)

If I had power, I would do very non-popular things. For instance with university, just to [perform] an attestation of the staff of the university, and there will be lots of vacancy. [...] All the faculty members. Their academic merit. Questions like who is going to change this, is the question that needs to be resolved. (Davit)

There is, there is some resistance, there is inertia, there is you know, the conservatism of elder generations, there are plenty of defensive strategies of people who try to ignore any standards and who, because the application of these standards would affect them, and, so they are hoping that time will pass and nothing will happen and they will, they will achieve the age of retirement and they will get good salaries until then and so on, and they can survive and so, for many people that's the option, and that is why the balance is so difficult but in the long term the generational change will take place. (Gabriel)

These evaluations coming from internationalised faculty point to the existence of a profound discursive (and materially experienced) struggle for the creation of a new ideological vision of higher education. One dominant opposing ideology is based on the soviet educational system with its characteristics perceived as the traditional or classical system, often based on patronage and self-reproduction and status-quo preservation of senior academic ranks and another ideology is provided by the newer notions of entrepreneurialism, internationalisation, competition and meritocracy.

8.5 The exercise of agency in new institutional settings.

In the majority of the interviews, the most consistently mentioned structural factor that allowed for some degree of successful individual or collective agency in the reform process on the part of internationalised faculty was opening of new teaching institutions or sub-institutional structures in which the internationalised faculty could find a more welcoming playing field as innovators. The new institutions in which some faculty found themselves ranged from new departments, centres of post-graduate study, to new universities. Some new structures were formally integrated into or affiliated with the state educational institutions and sometimes they were independent, private or new state universities. However, whatever their exact character, what distinguished the majority of these new structures from stable institutions was a degree of ‘openness’ to Western influences or even direct seeking of Western support and an international outlook in their functioning.

Several interviewees found their own employment in such institutions: two Georgian interviewees have moved from their original employer and alma mater- the oldest state university to be employed at two new institutions (one state and one private):

And also I think, the situation is more flexible at the new university, easier to change things because its entirely new, and when something is entirely new, they have, how to say, opportunities for change, when something is so traditional, even if they introduce new reforms, still the reforms go very clumsily. So in this sense, the new university is more flexible, elastic, more susceptible to change and I think it has better perspectives also in the future. They have also better salaries, so there is a flux, a leakage of minds from one university to the other. For example, I myself was taken from the [main state university] to there. (Lukas)

Now it's called [university name], because it started growing, and here I realised that unlike in State university there are more opportunities here. Because here you don't have to prove that two and two is four, which is still debatable in the state university. Here you are more flexible to bring young people in with Western education who have PhD from Sorbonne, from American universities, so, and there was no problem for me to bring these kinds of people, it was easy, so what I am doing is, since the state university, if I stay there I cannot progress, so in this university we have some kind of mixture of American and Georgian, the Chancellor is Georgian, some school directors are American so I am trying to learn something new, which the state university might need after ten years so I am doing this now, why should I waste time when these people, they are still sleeping and I cannot wait [...]. (Julius)

Lukas is quite direct in evaluating the new institutional structure as more reform- oriented, able to develop better curricular innovations, and able to attract talent, like himself, away from the state university. The dominant discourse in this narrative is one of direct competition for resources and students between the old and the new universities. Julius is also building a

narrative of his new university as an explicitly internationalised structure which allows him to push forward his own leadership agenda, very much in opposition to the state university where he can not make progress with any management ideas he might have.

A similar assessment of one's own institution is shared by Artur, who works at a new undergraduate collage, formally part of a big Russian state university, but trying to develop an alternative and an explicitly American style of education with foreign funding and links to a US liberal arts college:

[...] well, the Russian state system is entirely late Soviet and post Soviet system, and it's very conservative, and we are trying to introduce Americanised system. [...] Here we have elements of the American system though the [college] as you probably know is hybrid. There are rules of state institution that we cannot bypass and some things we manage to introduce. (Artur)

Among the Ukrainian interviewees there are also narratives that are based in at least three different types of such newer institutional structures. Daria teaches predominantly at a new sociology department integrated into a classical state university but still taking a very different stance towards the curriculum and instruction, and relying heavily on young internationalised faculty and internationalised collaborators to develop the curriculum.

Our chair was established in 2002 because at that time there were several persons who studied abroad, who had some experience with sociology, including our chair because she taught several times abroad as well. (Daria)

Internationalisation in the shape of experiences of teaching abroad is here established as a direct source of knowledge of the curriculum and as a basis for significant academic leadership position - that of a founder of a new chair (department) in sociology. It is well established in Daria's own case, and in the reported cases of her other colleagues that the internationalised chair in this instance was building the new faculty by quite deliberately targeting and inviting young academics who had obtained MA degrees abroad in order to begin building the department.

Igor teaches at a new economics department modelling itself explicitly on Western approaches to teaching economics, located in the state university. The new department had split off from the old economics department, and has been quite successful at attracting ever increasing student numbers and therefore also resources away from the original department.

In 2003 we split this department in two and I went to another department - it is now called international economic analysis and finance. Shortly- 'international economics'. And actually we did that, because first of all, we see another growth and another ideology of economics. And in our region our vision of economics is quite different and it's more related to Western experiences. Yeah, this old department is more related to what we had here, like Soviet economics, I don't know planned economics, political economy, stuff like that. ...And I think we are quite successful with that, because initially only six people were at our new department and now we have twelve teachers, so this means that students prefer to go to our department and if we have more students then we will have more teachers. ...This means we are winning this competition at least for now, and also a good thing what I see here, is better selection of students to our department. Our department is treated as 'hard to study in' department. Compared to this other one. (Igor)

It is important to note that the language of outright competition for students is again used in this narrative, and behind this is the material resource allocation as well as development of prestige associated with being able to deliver a Western-style program in economics.

Finally, a few of the Ukrainian interviewees also teach at a new institutional structure- an experimental post-graduate centre existing semi-independently from the state university and offering new MA degrees in the social sciences. Here, an excerpt from Robert's narrative can serve as an example of the same enthusiasm that the internationalised faculty had for working in such institutions:

But I am very satisfied with this program because it gives you the possibility to do what you learnt and also it gives you a lot of freedom to experiment. In other schools where I had the possibility to teach I did not have this, so it's very good, I would think this one is a kind of model of this Bologna philosophy, maybe not exactly, because it's always local speciality [specificity] that comes into plays but comparing to other institutions.
(Robert)

Working at such institutions is often associated not just with an explicit and internationally oriented reform agenda, but, it also seems to result in a different working culture, and especially in different relations with students. The private character of the setting was associated with better approach of students to their studies by Julius.

[...] I mean in order to pass a subject, you have to have seventy percent, in state university fifty one is enough, and also in state university they have no grading system well established, they, you know, some lecturer can give you something for forty percent, and he does not have any [assessment] rubrics, it is subjective. ...this is not the case in private university, you have like Western standards, like in America, or also if a student fails, he has to

take the course again, he has to pay again for this so he has double motivation here. State university, if you fail he doesn't care because he doesn't have to pay, he will go to another lecturer, a weaker one, and he will pass and he will get this credit. He will not come to you. But now the good thing is that there is a sort of selection, the good ones they come to me, the bad ones they don't come. (Julius)

So the new university setting, for Julius, allows him to implement student assessment and grading practices that he associates with higher quality teaching and to avoid a certain informality and easiness of degree progression that students at big state funded universities can enjoy.

This evaluation of openness and innovative character of newer institutions was shared by some interviewees who worked in more established or traditional universities. For instance, Jakub is based in the big state university (although in an explicitly reforming department) but he considers the situation of new, private institutions as much more innovative and flexible:

Of course, smaller private universities are doing much better, because, it is easy to manage, and they don't have this institutional history whether negative or positive, both affect everything. [...] in smaller institutions, we know the institutional history, they started for example ten years ago and then gradually build up curriculum and introduced new and new fields and they are much more advanced than state universities and they are more flexible in terms of money and everything. (Jakub)

Here, it is the institutional (and academic leadership) path dependence that creates a certain slowness in institutional learning as demonstrated by the still prevailing bureaucratic paper trail and old fashioned funding structures and procedures that make many changes desired by internationalised faculty at older universities more problematic.

However, this was clearly not perceived to be the case in all new institutional settings.

Although his account is based on an overgeneralisation of the quality of students at private institutions, Davit has a specific memory of an event that exposed, in his eyes, the woeful quality of students at his country's new private institutions (as diploma mills):

Last year I remember [a professor from a Western university]. He gave a presentation about globalization and stuff, with a huge audience in one of the leading private universities in Armenia. And I guess nobody understood anything, I was there. I was feeling I'm alone, like the questions which I asked there could be very much controversial, contested, I was ready for somebody to ask me a counter question, why do you think that what you said to the presenter is this and that, and what I said was controversial to myself, they didn't ask me a single question, they didn't ask the presenter any controversial questions. And I thought that I'm sorry because of the quality of the audience . (...) The university and how it selects people. It doesn't select. It's only business. Yes they have perfect equipment, but the students, I'm sorry, it's a failure. (Davit)

Clearly, according to Davit, there are private institutions that cannot offer any better quality education than the discredited state ones. Davit points out that the low quality of the degree programs in some institutions is caused by accepting any student who can pay the fee and this forces universities to function in business terms, leading to improvement in technical equipment and facilities which in no way addresses the low level of intellectual life at the university. In this account, interestingly, it is ultimately the students (and the leadership selecting students) who are blamed for this state of affairs.

This example points to an undercurrent of thinking among the internationalised academics, in which they equate new institutions with a reform orientation and, at the same, acknowledge that many of these institutions still constitute the second-best choice for ‘the best’ students. So the position of innovators is not always acknowledged as leaders in the field of higher education development, as they lack the social capital of oldest institutions and cannot attract the best students, thus becoming a kind of second-tier innovative centres. The discourse of prestige associated with older and more established university structures able to accept the best students on state scholarships, is also still present in the accounts of institutional change. This is also acknowledged explicitly by Artur in relation to his own, otherwise fairly successful institution, which is not able to attract the very best students to its innovative program:

They [the students at the college] are weaker, but that is the problem of recruitment, it [the college] is not that well known, the state diploma has a prestige. So the first place is usually the state university plus some people want to study something professionally so why would they go to a liberal arts college? Unfortunately, so maybe we are the best teachers in the city but we don’t have the best students, overall, of course some are good. So that is the problem. (Artur)

But where the current institutions, both state and private, are not considered of adequate quality to be able to implement reform, as is the case in Davit’s narrative, the solution is still to create a completely new, but better and more reform-oriented and more professionally managed institution:

My dream, which maybe now is not very realistic, it is a project, maybe I can contribute to somebody else who is more powerful who can do this, to have, if not reforming the existing university, but found, to establish a new

one. Which might be very much different from the older ones. [...] Something that will be qualitatively very different from the ones that exist. There should be a clear management, it should be undertaking like in any other, there should be business minded people, but not only that surely, there should be academics there that are highly qualified. I'm not going to put it this way: they should all be Western trained this and that because it not always gives them credentials, unfortunately, for being a highly qualified academic, but I think this could be one of the advantages for possible applicants to teaching staff. (Davit)

All in all, the internationalised faculty who, in their own assessment, are located in new and reform-oriented institutions present a very different view of their capacity to participate in the reform process to those who are working in more traditional or in long-established locations. The internationalised faculty in reforming institutions are eagerly taking up part of the challenge of redefining new curricula and new approaches to teaching which they believe should characterise their programs, they perceive themselves as agents of change and they perceive the reform process as individually and collectively meaningful for them and their colleagues in their departments.

8.6 Summary of findings regarding orientations to reform.

The systems in which most interviewees found themselves have been preoccupied with some form of a reform agenda, usually subsumed under the broad categorisation of the Bologna process (which can be equated with various Europeanising or Westernising ideals as well as purely local inventions dressed up as following 'international standards') and they have also been dealing with the aftermath of the academic disruptions of the systemic change and the economic crisis in the 90's. The interviewees' perspective on their respective higher education

system's successful reform (towards this imagined Western-like ideal) was in most cases negative, with Georgian academics being cautiously optimistic.

Many of the academics feel they have very little part to play in reforming the whole educational system and their agency rarely moves beyond their individual department or university, but they still have very clear views of what they would do if they were in a powerful decision-making position. Internationalisation is clearly linked to a perception of the academics' better judgement about the best direction for higher education development and they tend to have very strong views on what is best and worst practice at their home institutions.

The interviewed academics however, were clearly desiring a reform process that would allow them to play a role in transforming their departments and which would bring their institutions closer to what they themselves understood as their own experience-derived 'international standards', modelled on the institutions they had visited or studied at. In the majority of cases, they perceived such adaptation to be possible mainly in some very unusual institutional locations such as new departments, or new private universities. Internationalised academics who worked in such institutions saw themselves as agents or even leaders of reform or reorganisation of the educational process, even if they had just started their academic career. Regardless of their institutional positioning, the narrative that the majority of the internationalised academics are constructing is of themselves as reformers, even 'visionaries', capable of imagining a completely new quality of educational system.

The internationalised faculty build their own sense of professionalism in direct opposition to the academic oligarchs who are constructed as guardians of older ideology in higher education; and they are also sceptical of the power of the state to impact institutions through top-down reform agendas. However, they are supporters of the broad reform trends (such as those identified as deriving from the Bologna process). They normally subscribe to the newer discourses of competitive and employability-driven higher education that characterise such reform agendas.

Conclusion

The research topic and the underlying theoretical approach.

This thesis has been an outcome of my interest in internationalisation, and my conviction of the significance of this process. In the introduction to this thesis I argued that the experience of internationalisation has been particularly significant for the personal and professional lives of academics in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union in the context of unprecedented change of educational systems and wider social structures, caused first by transition from state socialism, and subsequently by new pressures of Europeanisation and globalisation. This argument has been the starting point for my conviction that the impact of internationalisation, construed as an individual experience of other (predominantly Western) educational systems can be qualitatively researched by focusing on a sample of individuals who have had this experience. My aim has not been to point to a direct causal link between internationalisation and any specific policy emulation or particular institutional development in any specific Eastern European country or in any specific single institution. My aim has been to study its impact on the academic as individuals, or, in other words, on their self-constructions of academic and professional identity and practice and their own perspectives on change in higher education.

This focus on the individuals, rather than policy and its implementation has been an attempt to theoretically consider the linkages between global and regional processes such as globalisation or Europeanisation (and its specific manifestations within transitional higher

education) and individuals who are both constrained and enabled by changing educational circumstances and policy discourses. This is an alternative to system-centred theorisations and follows the conceptualisation of ‘glonacal agency heuristic’ provided by Marginson and Rhoades (2002) in relation to the process of globalisation in higher education and its varied significance and effects in different locations, where local forces, national dimensions and global processes form unique shifts and open or close opportunities for local agency. Still, the above theorisation is concerned particularly with the dynamics between the local level understood as institutional level and policy forces working on national and supra-national level. I try to take the ‘local’ aspect of the approach further, by not concentrating on the institutional level but instead by moving into the analysis of individual actors that inhabit and co-construct any educational space - that is the academics themselves.

In the light of this, the thesis has been an attempt to qualitatively explore two related research questions:

R.Q.1. How is the internationalisation process becoming embedded in academic identities in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union?

R.Q.2. What are its effects on the academic’s understanding of the professional practice, policy change and their position in higher education?

The theoretical stance of considering the individual in the process of the construction of their academic identity and practice has also been motivated by the discussions of social change in post-industrial societies leading to theorisations of reflexive modernisation (Beck, Giddens and Lash, 1995) and to the development of the concept of individualisation (Beck and Beck-

Gernsheim, 2002) as an alternative relationship between the individual and social structures in the context of social transformations. I understand individualisation as a process of complex, risky, narrative identity construction in conditions of unprecedented social change such as modernisation, transition or globalisation, leading to the creation of novel, often fractured, changing and multiple identities. My approach to individualisation is not un-critical, I recognise that in many social locations and educational settings it may be an overused and overgeneralised concept which hides inequalities and propagates neo-liberal agendas in education (e.g. Clegg and David, 2006; Skelton, 2005). In fact, my own research is partly documenting a similar process occurring among East European academics.

In this research project I have used the concept of individualisation as a potential structuring and explanatory principle through which the new academic identities can be studied. The concept was suitable since it allowed me to focus on novel, strategic, reflexive and discursive construction of the life narrative in changing social realities. My specific interest in this thesis has been the extent to which a newer, hybrid academic identity may be constructed out of experiences of internationalisation among a selection of Eastern European academics. The focus on these individuals is not intended to empirically exhaust the topic of internationalisation in the academic profession of these countries, it is meant to provide an empirical/theoretical probe that would allow for the description and partial theorisation of a phenomenon that is largely unstudied in Western literature; and that is at best treated in very cursory ways in larger discussions of policy transformation in specific country studies.

Of course, my thesis does not claim to describe all experiences of internationalisation among the academics of these countries, and neither can the internationalised academics represent the rest of the academic profession in their home countries or in great majority of educational institutions of these countries, but my argument is that the ideological impact of internationalisation is an important development to observe in the process of formation of newer academic elites. It is important to study it qualitatively as it may be part of the reconstruction of larger or even global discourses and reinventions of the meanings of higher education in post-socialist societies.

Another reason for the seemingly unusual selection of the research sample (spanning several countries) has been my institutional positioning in the middle of the processes of internationalisation that I am attempting to study, in a specific international organization or, rather in a trans-national policy network associated with my university and the Open Society Foundations (Stone, 2008). Though the network itself has not been the object of my study, it has clearly provided an alternative, international, institutional ‘location’ (or space of flows) that allows me to capture individuals variously implicated and variously impacted by the network’s own internationalisation activities. My positioning in the middle of one set of professional development programs and internationalisation-related activities has also given me a unique practitioner’s perspective and has necessitated an autobiographical analysis of my own personal internationalisation experience. Being a practitioner of academic development has also been a significant drive to focus on the individuals as such rather than their contexts, since it is my day-to-day job to engage with individual university teachers, and to facilitate their professional development in an international environment.

In undertaking this research, I hoped to be able to shed some light on the meanings of the process under study and to reach more critical conclusions about its significance for higher education. Much of what has been found in my material has already been materially experienced by me and my colleagues in our professional and personal lives. However it has not yet been studied and systematically presented in the way I hope I have managed. So there is no expectation on my part that the empirical material will be surprising to audiences familiar with my own context and the processes of internationalisation observable in this context, on the contrary, I would hope that my colleagues would recognize the experiences and meanings derived from my analysis as corresponding to their own experiences and meanings. However, I do hope the analysis is rich enough to be able to generate further discussion and lead to more context-specific studies in the future. I believe that this empirical material, and the theoretical, methodological discussion behind it is of interest to other scholars interested in internationalisation, and I hope it has provided an alternative way of approaching the topic to the usual evaluative policy-driven and descriptive studies in which the literature on internationalisation (and much literature on higher education) abounds. I believe that an in-depth, qualitative, narrative or biographical study of higher education practitioners from this specific region (or from a specific historical legacy of social transformation) also provides a meaningful way of doing higher education research which has only been deployed in some studies.

The research design and methodology.

This thesis follows a qualitative, discourse-oriented perspective which utilises the biographical and narrative research approaches combined with qualitative interview elements. The perspective is based on an understanding of discourse and material realities as mutually constitutive or dialectically related but not fundamentally the same, therefore in its epistemological orientation it is closest to the critical realist stance, rather than a post-structuralist stance (e.g. Fairclough 2006). My interest in the individual and their lived experience can be usefully connected to a discourse orientation, and I agree with some components of a post-structuralist stance in seeing discourse as key in social research (e.g. MacLure 2003). Discourse is a key component of my study as it is through discursive means that I have been able to gather, analyse and interpret data- as specific narratives about identity, practice or educational change.

This does go hand in hand with the choice of life story narrative as a desired data set upon which to build my interpretation and it matches biographical and other qualitative interview methods I have used. Whatever the adopted analytical procedure, the work of narrative researchers is discursive or textual as it is the text that is already present at the stage of generation of the interview itself as Goodson points out: 'Life stories, then are the starting point for our work. Such stories are, in their nature, already removed from life experience: they are lives interpreted and made textual. They represent a partial, selective commentary on lived experience (Goodson and Sikes, 2001: 16)'. Nevertheless, I also believe that such life

stories are meaningful and productive interpretations of the lived experiences of the individuals under study.

In conceptual terms, by discourse, I mean both large-scale ‘orders of discourse’ (Fairclough, 2003; Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 1992,), which are the linguistic aspects behind what Ball calls ‘policy technologies’ (Ball, 2003: 215). In my study, I am particularly concerned with the private narratives or stories that amount to the creation of social identities during transformations of society (Fairclough 2003, 2005). To focus on this significant aspect more directly, I can quote Fairclough’s (2003: 24) understanding of discourse (or orders of discourse) as consisting of three key elements: specific discourses (ways of construing and reflecting social reality), genres (ways of interacting verbally, visually or in writing), and styles (ways of being or identities constructed through language). In relation to these aspects my study has focused on eliciting specific discursive styles or ways of being of the internationalised faculty through the medium of a life story interview in order to gain some access into specific narratives that these individuals use in order to build their understanding of what it means to be an internationalised academic. In this way, I was able to elicit these narratives and categorise them and also to focus on some specific constructions within the narratives, such as evaluations around the key stages in the academic development story, or justification for choices made (for example, discourse of chance in the professional development story). I tried to categorise and discuss the overall characteristics of the emerging identities of the internationalised academics and to illustrate specific beliefs and practices that make up such identities.

I hope that my methodological approach and my treatment of data (summarised in the next section) can be applied in other studies of internationalisation, or other studies dealing with social transformation of academic identity and practice. The current times in higher education in many countries may involve many further profound shifts in higher education that could be studied in this way, and some relevant examples of transformations already occurring have been studied in somewhat similar, qualitative, individual-practitioner-based studies, in particular in relation to the construction and negotiation of neo-liberal academic identities in the UK by Clegg (2008) or Archer (2008).

The research process.

The research process consisted of theoretical and background policy literature review, followed by some pilot studies (whose findings are included as part of the data set) and then followed by subsequent contacting of other interviewees. The interviewees were consciously and opportunistically targeted by me personally, through my own institutional network (programs, events of my own office) and through key contacts in a few other university locations (which are usually in themselves part of the same institutional network). By the later stages of the research process, I targeted mainly interviewees from three countries (Russia, Georgia and Ukraine) whose input constitutes the bulk of the research project. In the pilot stage of the research process, my scope of country representation was much wider (including Romania, Bulgaria, Armenia and one Belorussian interviewee). I have considered all the interviews I made relevant to the research interest and rich in data, so I have used them all in my analysis even though a focus on only one or two countries would have been easier to

justify in terms of a policy context discussion. The analysis is built on 20 fully recorded, transcribed and analysed interviews.

As I began to analyse these interviews, I realized that my amount of data was large and quite rich in personal and wider meanings and there is a significant amount of overlap and consistency of meanings and discourses that allowed me to make my analysis and present it in the thesis.

In my analysis I used several stages of working with the narratives. First of all, I had to transcribe the interviews. Following that, I made a 'narrative case reconstruction' based on each raw transcript which allowed me to trace the main stages of the life story and its main biographical meanings, and also to put on paper first ideas on codes, categorizations, key meanings arising out of each narrative. I was then able to use this material to look across cases looking for discourses and categorisations that were shared and that could become part of the analysis aimed at answering my first research question on the meanings of internationalisation for the construction of academic identity. This was the process that led to writing of the first two empirical chapters of the thesis.

In order to answer the second research question, I used an alternative analytical strategy, one that is more typical for qualitative interview research. Namely, I focused on the case reconstructions as well as referred to full interview transcripts to identify chunks of data related to academic practices and to evaluative statements on higher education policy and management practices. These were then filed together under appropriate codes (which often

took shape of a propositional statement rather than a single word) and this led to the creation of separate files with data thus categorised. This material was then used in my presentation of findings in the last two chapters of the thesis.

This means that my analysis is partly undertaken through the categorization, comparison (across two or more individual cases) and subsequent presentation of parts of the material in a particular sequence in the empirical chapters.

Main research findings.

My findings generally build on my personal autobiographical observations that a subset of academics in Eastern Europe has made internationalisation a key aspect of their professional development and academic identity. This is certainly the case with the academics I interviewed who derived profoundly productive meanings from internationalisation for their academic identity construction and their espoused practice. This productivity amounts to the construction of partial, hybrid or multiple academic identities. Many of these identities take the position of more informed, reform-oriented academic innovators, but they are often conflicted regarding some aspects of local practices, their position in the system, or their desired degree of ongoing international research presence.

International experiences were pursued by the interviewed academics as a way of creating a new academic reality for themselves, and as a way of exercising the agency that social transformation opened up for them. Having said that, the story of some internationalisation

experiences, particularly during professional training part of the academic socialization, were often experienced seemingly passively and were later understood as ‘chance’ or ‘luck’ initiated events or as direct help from other significant individuals. Though the actions of the internationalised academics display many of the qualities of the individualized individual, in terms of stepping up to the new opportunities, taking risks, changing their qualifications and, sometimes, their destination institutions, not all aspects of these experiences are self-constructed as individualized actions. Nevertheless, these were significant experiences constructed as key turning points in the life story and as timely self-interventions into their professional development, leading to the creation of a more specialized and updated, more globally aware and, in the end, a strongly individualised and hybrid academic identity.

The academics in my study experienced their key international experiences as an important resource for the creation of an alternative and new professional self, and they took great care to differentiate themselves from ‘others’, from previous generations, from their more localised colleagues. Internationalisation was indeed usually experienced as individualisation, as opening up of new spaces and capacities for new ways of being. This was a risky and uncertain option of self-realisation that turned out to be personally life-changing and professionally strategically beneficial in most cases. However, it required an enormous amount of emotional and discursive work in terms of reintegration into the profession, continuing construction of the new international identity, negotiation of local obligations (particularly in relation to family life obligations among women) and, in some cases, uncertainty about where one ultimately fitted best.

Thus, individualisation proved to be a useful tool through which to understand the kind of professional and personal identity work that the interviewees were doing. It also fitted well the larger context of unprecedented social change with the opening up of genuinely different mobility and professional development opportunities which these individuals decided to make use of. Still, there were aspects of the life story that did not follow the logic of individualisation in most cases (with one or two exceptions), such as choices related to the geographical location of home (usually the city of origin) or the demands of family life and its different stages (particularly in relation to child rearing by female interviewees). Therefore, the academics interviewed could be seen as individualised individuals to a large extent, but only in relation to the formation of their academic professional identity and their somewhat elite professional status.

The most pronounced aspect of the internationalised academic identity construction was self-identification with the discipline and disciplinary practices. In particular, this could be seen in terms of exposure to significant sources of new academic content, ways of interacting with disciplinary knowledge and practicing the knowledge production through research approaches. This aspect of internationalisation was perceived as by far the most meaningful and productive and also most life changing and personally significant for the academics involved. In fact, the opportunities of internationalisation in this dimension were often used to change a disciplinary identity or specialization altogether, to effectively rebuild oneself in a new identity and a new discipline, or to fill significant perceived gaps in disciplinary training derived from home educational institutions. Even if the disciplinary specialisation remained the same, international experiences were usually key stages of academic development for the

individuals involved, they were used to define new research subjects for dissertation writing, gain access to key resources such as literature and supervisory advice, or to find more appropriate research approaches not much practiced by local academics. For these academics, internationalisation became the main life stage of their academic progression, often responsible for completed doctoral theses and for the renewed enthusiasm for the academic career track as an appropriate and desirable activity.

Apart from disciplinary training, there were consequences for teaching and student assessment and other academic work practices, particularly as they were often experienced as part and parcel of the disciplinary socialisation process that made or remade these individuals into academics. But this aspect was much more open to re-negotiation and conflict as a result of local pressures of the institutional or departmental dominant practices, older habits and material restrictions exercised by the other actors in the context of teaching. The impact of internationalisation on publishing or other formats of research presentation and international academic networking was also present, particularly among those who experienced doctoral study abroad, but this was also one aspect that had to be amended or often sacrificed to national academic practices and material realities in many of the cases.

The degree to which internationalisation impacted academic identity was in general associated with the type and length of the experienced mobility, with doctoral study experience leading to the most profound changes amounting to the creation of truly international or multiple (local and foreign) academic identities. These were the narratives of complete or profound internationalisation of identity. In these cases, the self-worth of the academic was derived

directly from the realized continued internationalisation and from being part of a global or international network of academics. While able to fit into the local academic culture, these academics also continued to see themselves as foreign to it and as potentially capable of leaving the system altogether.

In most of the cases of my interviewees, internationalisation through shorter (second degree, or part of degree) study were associated with the reforming of disciplinary identity, with partial adoption of international research orientation, teaching approaches, educational philosophies derived directly from one's own student experience abroad or from observed practices of colleagues and supervisors. In these narratives of significant internationalisation, general career progression and some of the practices including desired publication strategies remained driven by local needs. Local or alternative research and recognition networks were very important to these internationalised academics and they usually derived self-worth from the work they were doing for their own institution or their discipline in the local or national context. These academics displayed hybrid characteristics in their identity construction and some of them were actively considering further study in an international environment or were concerned with keeping up their international profile in some ways. Continued internationalisation was considered both a necessity but significant further internationalisation often became very problematic and became of secondary importance in the context of the localized professional and personal life.

For some academics, internationalisation derived through shorter term programs, not involving any formal study, was a source of a better orientation regarding alternative

academic practices in their own discipline to which they aspired, but to which they did not feel they had direct access. In these few narratives of partial internationalisation, where the individuals experienced only short term international study or fellowship programs, the effects was partial knowledge of other systems more than an internationalised academic identity. These individuals have shown a remarkable capacity for using and adapting almost any aspects of their international experiences for their own career progression in the local institutional context or as a source of a new understanding of themselves. For them, internationalisation was a source of on-going additional professional development. However, this type of internationalisation sometimes led to a feeling of inadequacy, either in relation to foreign colleagues or in relation to younger and seemingly more significantly internationalised colleagues in the local context.

Generally speaking, all internationalised academics derived a specific new comparative perspective on education, based on comparisons of their original educational institutions as representatives of post-socialist systems contrasted with their somewhat generalized views of Western educational systems derived from their material experiences in particular institutions. To put it in more critical terms, the narratives showed a significant ideological re-orientation towards foreign institutions and systems categorised as legitimate centres of prestige, excellence, as centres of the professional life and donor organisations providing a wealth of resources and symbolic power. This perspective resulted in a new understanding of alternative research and teaching practices that the internationalised faculty usually wished to apply in their own contexts. They displayed much enthusiasm for the majority of institutions they

came in contact with, and this often resulted in an unproblematic idealisation of Western academic practices and institutional arrangements as far above the local standard.

This idealisation ranged from noticing the materially different resources available in such institutions but inaccessible in the local context (such as office, library, database, student support resources), through the obviously different disciplinary and curricular structures and teaching and research practices, to human and management relations (ways of interaction between supervisors and students, between academics, and between staff and students).

These meanings in turn led to a widely present evaluative stance and a strong general reform orientation towards home educational systems and institutions. Because internationalised academics partially identified themselves with foreign educational institutions which they considered to be superior in most academic practices, they were usually inclined to either disregard local reform as meaningless and inadequate or to be at the forefront of such changes, fully investing themselves into creating newer curricular and institutional structures. Even if they usually had little exposure to management practices during their internationalisation experience, when placed or invited into a new educational context (or a Western-oriented one) they perceived their new skills as highly valuable and when working in newer educational institutions, they often found themselves in leadership positions quite early on in their academic career. If they had to return to less 'innovative' institutions, they often felt like outsiders, feeling marginalized from the perceived academic centre and often wishing to leave the institution or even the academic profession.

Most of the internationalised academics I interviewed displayed a perception of being an elite part of a new generation of academics; the majority of them were deeply critical about both academic and leadership skills of older academics and decision-makers. For the internationalised academics, in most cases, the past and those representing the past were to the detriment of higher education and had to be disregarded. The most often used justification for this stance was the perceived widespread corrupt or non-transparent practices in peer review, hiring or leadership practices and low quality of disciplinary content knowledge among the majority of older researchers in their own discipline in the home country.

In material terms, most internationalisation programs these academics participated in were quite well-organised and with adequate funding for all the basic needs, therefore they allowed the individuals an unprecedented opportunity to concentrate on research and studying. So, the great majority of the experiences recounted were remembered as positive and beneficial to the self. But many of the experiences of internationalisation were in fact highly problematic and difficult emotionally, as the individuals struggled to adapt to the communication and study in a foreign language, different academic requirements, grading practices and expectations. More importantly, internationalisation led to a desire for further internationalisation which could clash with the expectations of every day life, in particular in relation to women academics with young children and family obligations. The resulting personal positioning was often profoundly contradictory as the academics considered themselves both better trained than their colleagues and also not internationalised enough to fulfil their newer sense of where they should be located academically. In two cases, the early experiences of internationalisation were actually materially or psychologically difficult for the individuals

and were experienced as having negative effects (an unwillingness of going abroad in one case, and difficult medical and financial complications in another case) even if they were academically productive.

In summary, the experiences of internationalisation, in the forms of international programs of study and professional development led these academics to become spokespersons for newer, reinvented higher education. They generally desired a higher education that was managed by younger and similarly Westernized individuals, with Western practices of teaching, research and collaboration replacing older, post-socialist, educational practices. In adopting these beliefs, they were proponents of a thorough reinvention of higher education and were often (though not in all cases) believers in the capacity of new, more market-oriented or private higher education institutions.

As a result of my analysis, I can argue that the experience of internationalisation of academic identity and practice has been contributing to the remaking of the practitioners of higher education in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union in such a way as to make them potential proponents of the new ‘orders of discourse’ (Fairclough, 2003: 24) such as managerialism, knowledge society, the European Higher Education Area. The new preferred higher education discourses were those related to profound reform of higher education, often based on an understanding of a more Europeanised (e.g. Bologna process compatible) higher education system, or on the desire of new, alternative, more market-driven and managerialist higher education institutions, seen as laboratories of good practice and catalysts for further change among the more traditional higher education institutions.

Some shortcomings of the study.

This research is of a very broad empirical character and therefore it cannot cover all contextual factors that could be important to understand and to adequately distinguish between the characteristics of all the different educational systems or particular institutions where these individuals are currently located. It has to be said that these locations and systems are not the same, they have different orientations to the existing European policy processes and different domestic pathways and speeds of change, as has been pointed out by Howlett in relation to Russia, Ukraine, Georgia and Kazakhstan (2006). Instead, this study targets individuals who share a similar set of experiences and a specific historical legacy of post-socialist transformation and who were present in a particular trans-national diffused context of my own network of organizations.

I realize that my targeting of individuals across systems is unusual, and better discussion of the policy context of internationalisation would perhaps be gained from focusing on one particular country or even one particular institution. However, I stand by my choice focusing on the level of diverse individual practitioners, because I was interested in how these different individuals experience a similar change of their circumstance, namely the possibility of internationalisation, entailing academic mobility away from their systems into other institutions and organizations, in order to complete or update their research or teaching skills. Though by this choice, the empirical reach is too broad and therefore generalisation regarding systems or cohorts of academics in any particular context is not possible. However, my

purpose is neither policy evaluation nor generalisation, rather it is theorisation of what internationalisation entails at the level of an academic professional. This theorisation is actually served by the strong similarities of experience and narratives created by individuals of otherwise very divergent contexts.

This interest in internationalisation of the academic professional allowed me to focus on diverse individuals ‘captured’ in a diffused, though identifiable international context. Since I was working in this context, this was also an opportunity for me to study this context and how it, and other international experiences, affects individuals from post-socialist countries. Thus, my study is limited by the disciplinary specialization of the individuals and it does not take their institutions or their educational systems as the object of study, though obviously it takes them as an important backdrop for the working lives and social transformation that these individuals live. Of course, if more resources and time were available, it would be extremely beneficial to do a long term, qualitative study, such as an ethnography of a group of individuals in specific institutional locations and therefore to be able to connect the local more to the institutional and national levels of change in higher education. My own doctoral study was however the outcome of certain time and material limitations regarding what I, as researcher engaged in full time work, could do and the time I could devote to research in the field, away from my own workplace.

It has to be said that this project was also the training ground for my skills in qualitative interviewing and the life story approach. This means that while my interviews were carefully planned, there have been mistakes with recording equipment and also an uncertainty as to

whether my research design would really work and yield adequate material. As is probably the case with all doctoral research projects, the design of my study, the number of interviews needed and the analytical procedure to be used in analysing them only became clear as I was part way through the process of gathering the data and analysing it. I am sure I would have done a better job of the research process if I had the benefit of the knowledge I have now at the end of the process.

Another possible limitation of my research relates to the presentation of data and the amount of my analytical voice that is explicit in the text of the empirical chapters. I do not engage in extensive description of every statement and category that appears in the interview material, choosing instead to present the material itself, in a specific sequence. Neither do I engage in discourse analysis in the sense of in-depth grammatical-semantic dissecting of very small samples of text as the focus here is still to preserve to some extent the individual voice and biographical detail of the narrative that these individuals tell. These individuals are not treated as policy text sources but rather as thinking, acting, living and embodied people and I have assumed that letting parts of their story speak directly to the reader will be the most meaningful way of presenting the data. Or, to put it very simply, I have found the data so rich and speaking so directly to my research concerns that, the data itself deserved to be preserved, and partially presented in its richness, rather than dissected to a very minute detail. Paraphrasing this data would have been possible but would significantly reduce the preservation of the sense of individual lives and life stories voiced.

Furthermore, it was my hope that the reader would find it easy to see why the specific chunks of narratives are located and structured in the text of the data presentation in specific ways. The presentation of specific aspects of narrative in the sequences and sections I created is an important aspect of my analysis of the data. I have focused my explicit analytical language on those aspects that were crucial for me to derive the answers to my research questions, to summarise and synthesise findings and to arrive at a more critical understanding of some of the narratives. This means, however, that some of the idiosyncratic and rich elements of each narrative which could have been the subject of extensive linguistic or critical analysis have been left for the reader to decipher for themselves. I understand that this could lead to some questions regarding particular aspects of data that may remain not as understandable as I myself thought they would be.

Implications of the study for further research and for professional practice.

This research has implications for the wide literature on internationalisation in several ways. For one thing, by focusing on the life story of academics in Eastern European context, I can bring forward an alternative understanding of what internationalisation is and what it entails. In my study, internationalisation means a hybridisation of academic identity and practice derived from experiences in other educational systems. So, internationalisation entails partial or complete adoption of educational practices, preferences, skills or philosophies (be it research, teaching, administration, peer review or others) derived from foreign educational institutions. This definition is different from the prevalent way of looking at internationalisation as an institutional policy process whereby an institution attempts to

change its profile by integrating international perspective into its various functions (see, in particular Knight, 2004).

Moreover, the many existing studies, apart from concentrating on short-term and program or institution-driven internationalisation, tend to be of very descriptive and largely quantitative nature. While there are recent studies of positive impacts of mobility on academic staff (Janson, Shomburg and Teichler, 2009), these tend to engage with individuals only as evidence for the existence of particular policy trends rather than engage with these individuals as probably the most important co-constructors of these trends. In other words, the internationalisation literature tends to be written for managers of higher education with management practices in mind and does not engage adequately with understanding the processes of academic work and life, which constitute the backbone of higher education practice.

My study tries to give voice to the internationalised academics as constructors of higher education meanings and often as change agents closest to implementing actual new practices. Of course, more studies focusing on such a qualitative view of internationalisation would be needed to provide a better empirical reach for any of my conclusions.

In more general terms, through its research approach, my study attempts to avoid what Robertson and Dale (2007) describe as ‘methodological nationalism’, ‘methodological statism’ and ‘spatial fetishism’ of higher education research, by deliberately not taking the level of an idealized or abstracted state or national system as my object of analysis. While this

study is far from perfect in its design, it is an alternative look at higher education change, taking the academic practitioner's experience and perspective as the main interest of my analysis.

On a theoretical level, my study speaks to a range of studies of academic identity in rapidly changing policy context, in various educational systems, in particular in the UK (Archer 2008, Clegg 2008). My study complements these qualitative studies by concentrating on changing academic identities in other, even more profoundly changing, locations. It confirms the general assertion that these studies make that higher education practitioners are now subject to new pressures, new policy discourses, management practices and policy technologies which are changing the nature and practice of what it means to be an academic and which require complex individual reflection, resistance and re-invention.

My research could also be of some interest for the broader theorizations of change in industrialised and post-industrial societies, namely studies that focus on the dynamics of individualization, or the creation of hybrid identities, such as 'the entrepreneur of oneself' (du Gay, 2006) and the 'portfolio-person' (Gee, 2000), as well as the studies within the sociology of mobility (Urry, 2000). Much more research is needed to pinpoint all of the effects of newer social circumstances on different sub-groups in different locations of the globalizing world engaging in the process of mobility and identity differentiation or reconstruction. Related to my own study, much more analysis and further research could be accomplished related to the broader sociological constructions of the self of the internationalised individualised

professional, the interplay between the professional and personal selves, or the gender aspect of the internationalised academic lives.

Finally, there are also implications of this study for the practice and the theorizations of academic development in the area of teaching and learning. Most studies focusing on teaching and learning development take a very narrow look at the changes in teachers' conceptions of teaching, for example regarding the degree of student-centredness in teachers' perspectives (Trigwell, Prosser and Waterhouse 1999), while the studies of internationalisation in relation to teaching and learning take a normative approach of prescribing what an internationally minded teacher should do in terms of curricular approaches and personal skills (e.g. Teekens 2003, Leask 2007, Sanderson 2008). There are very few studies of the possible interplay between teachers' international experiences and how they actually use these experiences in their work as teachers (Roxå and Renc-Roe 2010). Yet, individually and biographically constructed narratives of internationalisation are being used by the Eastern European academics in their everyday practice of teaching and learning in different ways than this literature suggests. Since internationalisation seems productive for academic identity and practice, professional development programs could benefit by a wider discussion of what is meant by the concept of internationalisation and what identities it may be producing in different educational contexts.

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